

Minutes of the Corporation Meeting

held on 8 November 2017

Present Ian Jewkes (*Chair*), Helene Jones (*Vice Chair*), David Williams (*Principal*), Amanda Allen, Elaine Cammies, Karen Cocker, Peter Coley, Kiran Dior, Jamie Fox, Mark Johnson, Louise Jones

In attendance Joanne Williams (*Director of Learning and Teaching*)
Jacquie Carman (*Director of Finance and Corporate Services*)
Jennifer Sunter (*Clerk to the Corporation*)
Jonathan Priest (*Information and Infrastructure Director*)

1 Apologies

There were none.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

3 Minutes of Meeting held 26 September 2017 and Matters Arising

The minutes of meeting held 26 September 2017 were approved as a correct record.

Under Matters Arising; progress against actions from meetings was addressed and it was agreed where items could be removed.

With regard to the West Midlands Superannuation Fund, Jacquie Carman reported on work that was currently ongoing.

4 Governance

4.1 Value Added Training

Jon Priest provided a detailed presentation on Value Added Data coverage across the College provision incorporating ALPS and L3VA to increase knowledge and understanding of the complexities involved.

Key points included the timeliness of what is provided, gaps in data provision regarding what courses are included in measures and how the data is used.

Governors discussed a range of questions arising from the presentation including how data could be skewed by student cohort, how data is used to predict grades, inform target setting and manage performance.

Additionally, student aspiration in relation to both predicted grades and university entrance offers was considered.

Jon Priest further explained next steps in use of ALPS connect data in work to raise achievement.

Members thanked Jon Priest for the training presentation.

(Jon Priest left the meeting)

4.2 Minutes of the Search and Governance Committee Special Meeting held 10 October 2017

The minutes of the Search and Governance Committee Special Meeting held 10 October 2017 were received.

4.3 Corporation Appointment

The Clerk outlined the work of the Committee in considering applications and in continuing to seek nominations. The Committee had brought forward a recommendation on appointment from its recent interview process.

The Corporation resolved, that subject to set eligibility criteria, Tiffany Harvey-Pallent be appointed as a governor to Halesowen College for one year in the first instance, commencing 28 November 2017, with a review at the end of July 2018 regarding continuation and alignment of appointment dates.

4.4 Good to Outstanding Action Plan

Members considered the approach for monitoring actions in the Good to Outstanding Plan and agreed that actions be dispersed to other plans including the Corporation Development Plan for 2018.

Action 4.4a The Clerk agreed to provide a progress report to members to ensure that all actions are addressed or are provided for in alternative plans.

4.5 FE Commissioner termly letter

The FE Commissioner's letter was noted. Jacquie Carman clarified the effect of the introduction of the insolvency regime, which further highlighted the responsibilities of the Corporation.

Action 4.5a It was agreed that a self-assessment report against the key points in the FE Commissioner's letter would be provided for the Audit and Assurance Committee.

5 Strategic Overview

5.1 Principal's Update

David Williams highlighted key meetings he had recently attended, particularly with the Black Country Colleges Consortium looking towards local issues and with the University of Worcester and Higher Education strategy.

With regard to the Director of Learner Services, members noted that the College sought to make an appointment but this would now be at a later date.

David Williams explained that the College was hoping to secure extra funding from the Education and Skills Funding Agency, which was being made available to support development, specifically that of work placements in industry for 16-18 year olds.

Members discussed the work required to develop infrastructure and capacity for new T-Levels, which will require each student to undertake 45 days of industry appropriate work experience.

Members asked a range of questions about addressing work experience and about course provision. Joanne Williams outlined the T-Levels being developed and the areas on which Halesowen College would focus.

The Principal's Update report was received.

5.2 Ofsted Inspection Report

David Williams was pleased to present the published Ofsted Report referring members to the summary findings where the positives greatly outweighed areas for development.

In response to questioning, David Williams confirmed that all courses now had specific targets.

The Chair asked how the report had been publicised. David Williams confirmed that a press release had been given and that the report itself could be accessed through the Ofsted and the College websites.

The Ofsted Inspection Report was received.

5.3 Update on Strategic Priorities 2015-2020 Plan

David Williams reported on core and enabling strategies for 2017-2018, particularly noting the work to further embed the use of STaRS, the progression of the Multi-Academy Trust and opportunities under the National Collaborative Outreach Projects. Also highlighted were school engagement and College reputation.

David Williams noted that Marketing was being developed under the Enabling Strategy 2 and that the estates strategy would be considered by members as part of the strategic planning work at the Corporation residential.

Governors questioned if the delayed appointment of a Learner Services Director would impact on professional services. David Williams responded that the delay would not be material.

The Update on Strategic Priorities 2015-2020 Plan was received.

5.4 Multi Academy Trust Developments

Members understood that there had been a delay in the transfer of Ridgewood School to the Stour Vale Multi-Academy Trust, however, due diligence was taking place and the completion date was expected in March 2018.

David Williams reported that Joanne Williams had been elected to Chair the Trust's Board.

The update on Multi Academy Trust Developments was duly noted.

5.5 Residential Planning

Members approved the outline plan for the Corporation's strategic planning residential schedule for January 2018.

6 Monthly Performance Information – David Williams

6.1 Annual Plan Monitoring Report 2016/2017 Final

The final monitoring report on 2016/2017 annual targets was considered.

David Williams reported that in general, performance had been positive, however, some targets had been missed.

Members asked if the attendance target of 90% was too high. David Williams noted that performance was approximately that of the sector average but that the 90% target was an aspirational target used across the College to drive improvement.

Members also asked about class sizes, which were noted as higher in the current year, payroll as a percentage of income and financial assets and liabilities. Jacquie Carman clarified the reporting of assets and liabilities and explained that the final outturn on staff income was on target. Jacquie Carman also noted that there had been some movement with transfer of staff to South Black Country Education Ltd.

In response to a question about pension increases, Jacquie Carman confirmed that this referred to non-cash values.

The Annual Plan Monitoring Report 2016/2017 was final.

6.2 Annual Plan Monitoring Report 2017/2018

David Williams explained an amended format with some new targets and which reflected the Common Inspection Framework.

Key points discussed included consideration of estate utilisation at the Corporation residential, close monitoring of Apprenticeship growth, which has an accumulative target measure, to ensure capacity and the College's bid to deliver to non-levy payers and attendance tracking.

6.2a Finance Management Report

Jacque Carman reported a stable financial position and drew out the following points.

Income remained less certain than in previous years with a larger proportion of provision being subject to achieving contract with potential clawback.

In relation to managing risk of bad debt, students paying tuition fees had been invoiced very early in the academic year.

With regards to expenditure, staff costs were being monitored, particularly in light of rising pension costs.

The need to review of investment in apprenticeships was also noted.

In response to governor questioning regarding wider consideration of financial ratios, Jacque Carman responded that financial and estates strategies would be considered at the Corporation residential.

The Management Accounts and Supporting Notes: September 2017 were noted.

7 Finance Reports – Jacque Carman

7.1 Student Union Annual Accounts 2016/17

Members considered the accounting position of the Students' Union and discussed their recent activities base in relation to supporting students and organised fundraising events.

Jacque Carman reported that staff were working with officers to encourage the best use of funds and student supportive activities.

The Student Union Annual Accounts 2016/17 were noted.

7.2 Bursary Fund and Student Finance Final Outturn

Jacque Carman reported on the range of financial support on offer and spending of funds, which were focused on removing barriers to learning. A significant number of students had been supported in 2016/2017 with a similar level of funds available in the current year. The demand remained high.

Members asked about fund overspend and ease of information access for Higher Education students. Jacquie Carman explained that the College addressed overspend by reducing the College administration allowance and agreed that it would be useful for Higher Education students to be provided with Bursary Fund information on a memory stick.

The Bursary Fund and Student Finance Final Outturn was noted.

8 Students, Teaching and Learning

8.1 Equality and Diversity Annual Report

Joanne Williams highlighted that the College had been awarded the National Centre for Diversity West Midlands FE Provider of the Year. The College is accessible and continues to embed equality and diversity in the classroom, through a tutorial calendar and cross college activities.

Members reviewed the data provided and discussed the range of engagement in activities, including the Wellbeing Trail and the Animal Café, noting the involvement of the Students' Union.

In going forward the College wanted to develop awards for students including an award for volunteering. In response to questioning it was noted that volunteering hours were captured for UCAS applications. However, a more consistent approach was needed, which would give a wider picture, including the breadth of student contribution to the community.

The Equality and Diversity Annual Report was received.

8.2 Prevent Duty Update and Risk Assessment

Members received a termly update which incorporated actions to continue to safeguard learners. All staff had been provided with a safeguarding update and the College had also promoted the Citizen's App to staff and students. A lockdown process was agreed and a drill was scheduled.

Jacquie Carman also highlighted the importance of balance in the College Freedom of Speech Policy.

Members noted that there was one risk rated Amber relating to Engagement with the Students' Union and that training would be organised to mitigate this.

The termly Prevent Duty Update and Risk Assessment was received.

8.3 Student Conduct Report

Joanne Williams reported that the College STaRS system was key to monitoring student conduct and, as such, action was being taken to ensure that its use was more fully utilised.

Both the Student Ambassador Scheme and the Student Achievement award were popular and effective and would continue. The Students' Union had provided additional seating which students valued.

Trends and actions for improvement were provided. The report addressed data across disciplinary sanctions, attitude to learning and attendance/punctuality. While overall student behaviour was noted as good there had been an increase in litter, an increase in student disciplinaries and a small amount of gang related activity.

Members asked about work to improve attendance and Joanne Williams highlighted the use of an Attendance App and continued work on increasing attendance to Maths and English classes.

The Student Conduct Report was received.

8.4 Initial Advice and Guidance Overview Report

Joanne Williams explained that all students were offered an Initial Advice and Guidance interview, however, not all student wish to attend.

Jacque Carman reported that the College's application and offer process had been revised and launched and while applications were lower than the previous year the new approach was very thorough, provided a better experience and enabled earlier capture of student needs and aspirations.

Joanne Williams further noted that it was important to continue to offer the interviews and students were now being allowed to book their own appointments. Members also noted that non-attendance did not equate to students not enrolling at the College and that a significant proportion of current learners had not applied prior to the College enrolment days.

Members asked questions about why students did not attend for interview and if the demographic dip was still relevant. Joanne Williams responded that the area was on the cusp of upturn but was still going through the demographic dip, conversely there had been an increase in 16-18 year old students. Students were aware that if they achieved required grades there would be a place for them at College, given local availability of provision.

The Initial Advice and Guidance Overview Report was noted.

9 Any Other Business

9.1 Halesowen College Enterprises – Directors

Corporation endorsement of the membership of the HCE Board of Directors was sought.

Members noted the composition and were satisfied that appropriate levels of assurance remained in place.

9.2 Project Bid

David Williams outlined the prospective role of the College supporting another College to improve, which was subject to a successful project bid to the College Improvement Fund.

Members asked about the impact on College business and were satisfied that the positives in staff and organisational development outweighed any negatives.

The Corporation endorsed the Principal to continue to engage with the project, which would be returned to the Chair.

Action 9.2b An update would be provided for the next meeting of the Corporation.

10 Date of Next Meeting

The Clerk confirmed that the next Corporation meeting was scheduled for Tuesday 28 November 2017.

The meeting closed at 8.40pm

Actions from Meetings			
Ref	Agenda item and action	Date/item for review	Reported by
Corporation Meeting 1 March 2017			
9.3 9.3a	West Midlands Superannuation Scheme The Corporation noted the position and the risks with the West Midlands Superannuation Scheme and approved that the Principal and Director of Finance and Corporate Services explore alternatives for future Corporation consideration.	July 2017 Ongoing Review February 2017	JCa
Corporation Meeting 26 September 2017			
4.2a	Review of Confidential File The Clerk agreed that following research, changes to ensure compliance with General Data Protection Regulations as they will come into force in 2018, would be addressed and reported as appropriate.	March 2018	JSu
Corporation Meeting 8 November 2017			
4.3a	Good to Outstanding Plan The following actions were consolidated. That: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ proposals on Governors awards for students and staff would be provided by the College Executive. ▪ a governor focus group could be provided for Student Survey feedback. ▪ governors would be invited to attend a session on initial advice and guidance in November 2017. 	November 2017 tba November 2017	JWi JCa JWi
4.4a	Good to Outstanding The Clerk agreed to provide a progress report to members to ensure that all actions are addressed or are provided for in alternative plans.	November 2017	JSu
4.5a	FE Commissioner termly letter It was agreed that a self-assessment report against the key points in the letter would be provided for the Audit and Assurance Committee.	November 2017	JCa
9.2 9.2b	Any Other Business – Project Bid An update would be provided for the next meeting of the Corporation.	November 2017	DWi