

Askham Bryan College Corporation

Corporation Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held Thursday 15 October 2020 – 10.00pm – 11.00am via Microsoft Teams

- 186.** Mike Galloway (MG), Linda Haigh (LH), David Lynch (DL), James Mullen (JM) – Student Governor/SU President, Martin Moorhouse (MM), Graeme Osborn (GO), Trevor Shaw (TS), Maureen Vevers (MV) - Corporation Chair, Tim Whitaker (TW) – Principal/Chief Executive Officer/Accounting Officer, Jordan Webster (JWe) – Student Governor/SU Vice President, Emma Wilkins (EW) and John Williams (JW) - Deputy Corporation Chair and Chris Moss (CM) – Co-optee.

JM and JWe were welcomed to their first meeting.

In attendance: Sandra Burnhill (SB) – Vice Principal, Judith Clapham (JC) - Clerk to the Corporation, Sharon Sheppard (SS) – Vice Principal.

Emma Barbery (EB) – Chief Finance Officer was not in attendance

Acceptance of apologies for absence: None

With over seven members present, the meeting was confirmed as quorate. It was resolved that Maureen Vevers chair the meeting. Maureen Vevers accordingly took the chair and declared the meeting open. The Chair reported that proper notice of the meeting had been given.

187. Declarations of Interest

The Clerk referred to the Register of Interests and asked if there were any amendments and for those who were highlighted in yellow to provide updates to the Clerk.

There were no changes to the Declarations of Interest as detailed in the register provided, none of which it was agreed amongst those present precluded anyone.

Those thought relevant are listed below:

- TW and GO as Directors of ABC College Co Ltd and ABC Enterprises Ltd.
- TW as a Landex Director.
- JW as a Governor at Kirklees College.
- MV as a University of York Court Member and University of York Archaeology Department Advisory Board Member
- DL stated that Andrew Jackson acts for the Natwest Bank where DL is employed.

The Chair reminded the Members that the College was also an exempt charity and that all transactions must be compliant with all obligations under applicable charity law.

188. Minutes of the meeting held 20 July 2020

Resolved: The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record, to be signed by MV as Chair.

189. Matters Arising from the minutes/action schedule

The Action Schedule was updated.

GO joined the meeting.

190. Chair's Report

MV welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked all for attending. MV stated that she was spending a lot of time in the College. It was noted that JW and MV had a one to one meeting with TW. MV stated that she had been very impressed with the Covid response plan and staff response. MV stated the Newton Rigg Strategic Review process is ongoing and that she was pleased with the progress being made in finance.

191. Chief Executive Report

Members agreed that aspects of minute 191 Chief Executive Report should be classified as confidential on the grounds of commercial sensitivity and reviewed in one year. The minutes and associated reports are therefore not available for circulation to the public, college staff or students (excluding senior post holders), along with any draft documents.

Consideration was given to the CEO Report providing an update to the Corporation on key areas of the business (Covid 19 and current position, Newton Rigg Review, Financial performance and recruitment) which TW presented.

TW highlighted:

- The pandemic situation is a significant financial risk to the organisation, as well as the organisational resource demands and challenge. TW confirmed that there are 7 positive cases of students at the College. Credit was given to the staff involved in dealing effectively with the cases. It was noted that the Agriculture provision at Newton Rigg has had to move online as a result. It was noted that it is the College responsibility to track and trace, which is challenging within resources. It was noted that TW attends the weekly PHE York meeting and there is a worrying trend of positive cases, but the College is responding accordingly.
- The next FEC Diagnostic Monitoring visit is due to take place 2 November.
- Underlying financial performance was much better than anticipated.
- Capital grant expenditure will come to F&GP.
- Additionally the sector has been subject to a number of significant ransom ware cyber-attacks so the risk to the College is heightened.

TS asked about the unplanned maintenance and is it a carry over. It was noted that due to timing and covid it had not been possible to undertake the work, but it has been included in the budget for 20/21 so is not an additional cost.

TS asked if the waiver letters are in place. It was confirmed that they are.

192. Strategy Newton Rigg Review

Members agreed that minute 192 Strategy should be classified as confidential on the grounds of commercial sensitivity and reviewed in one year. The minutes and associated reports are therefore not available for circulation to the public, college staff or students (excluding senior post holders), along with any draft documents.

TW reported that the Newton Rigg Strategic Review continues and the next stage is for full applications to be submitted by 30 October, with the next Steering Group due 16 November. At present the College is providing data via the Data Room.

193. Finance

Members agreed that aspects of minute 193 should be classified as confidential on the grounds of commercial sensitivity and reviewed in one year. The minutes and associated reports are therefore not available for circulation to the public, college staff or students (excluding senior post holders), along with any draft documents.

Consideration was given to the P12 management accounts.

194. Curriculum

Quality and Standards Committee 30 September 2020

Consideration was given to the Quality and Standards Committee update from 30 September 2020.

EW as Interim Chair reported and it was noted that:

- There had been a discussion regarding Covid19 and the huge amount of additional work with students to ensure a quality student experience, for which significant thanks were expressed, following guidance and managing position. Ready to flip online as required. College undertook online enrolment, induction with blended delivery, College is providing face to face delivery.
- Reviewing Terms of Reference to incorporate enhancement, cycle of business and timing of meetings for presentation on January. It was noted that EW is interim and MG will take over in January and will working on this for January.
- Curriculum Strategy considered. Recognised more as a delivery plan to enable consideration of income and resource for the student experience. Governors concerned premature before wider strategic discussion. EW and MG meeting with TW.

Committee considered:

- Student Voice Annual Report which provided assurance the student voice is heard. College considering Student Support resource. Looking at different ways of gathering feedback and best possible engagement with the Student Council to get student feedback.
- Talked about recruitment, but noted it is not consistent so how resources and impact, but were reassured, but need to monitor from a staff welfare perspective.
- FE Recruitment – 102% to target, variance across centres, considered how resourcing extra students – increasing class sizes
- FE KPIs will be set after R14. Achievement expected to outturn between 83-86% for FE technical. End point assessment not been possible. RHS not been possible to achieve due to practical assessment. Drop in Maths and English KPI due to functional skills and L2. Will move into an internal requires improvement and needs monitoring
- HE recruitment currently 110% against target – confident will meet budget which is important as impacts in year.
- HE KPIs – NSS below College KPI and assessing action plan to monitor as some aspects declined.
- Refocussing KPIs so report on top 5 – recruitment, retention, OfS TEF, student satisfaction and achievement, linking to risk, with others monitored eg graduate outcomes.

EW stated it was a challenging meeting, but hopefully supportive and also need to look at how celebrate successes and how can share best practice. Exec stated the challenge is welcomed.

Other areas covered at Q&S were:

- HR Report – focus on NR consultation – sense staff awaiting outcome from FEC Strategic Review.
- Legacy pension issue ongoing, but being addressed.

- Mandatory training compliance is high.
- About to enter appraisal window.
- PIAP linking to FEC recommendations, risk, including cyber security and online learning as key areas for improving in 20/21.
- Complaints Annual Report – monitored through performance reviews, SAR and actions in QiP. Overall complaints dropped, one ongoing. Governors assured that some upheld demonstrating a mature environment. Customer service and generally following policies and procedures a wider theme.
- Disciplinary Annual Report – reduced, but spike in Stage 4 due to specific issue. Tariffs being dropped.
- Safeguarding Annual Report – reassured that students feel safe, future focus on looked after children, safeguarding team, expecting an increase in referrals due to change in environment
- Working on curriculum development for progressing students.
- HEAB summary – expanding HE at Gateshead campus, dependent on the College acquiring FDAP which is dependent on the financial stability of the College and could lead to new programme developments.
- College remains OfS compliant.
- Positive external engagement.
- External validation of the SAR due to take place 8/9 December. Governors welcome to attend.

FE KPIs

Consideration was given to the FE KPIs report and early dashboard.

HE KPIs

Consideration was given to the HE KPIs report. It was noted that these will be refined as reported at Q&S Committee.

EW reported that she had attended the EDI Committee and there had been a good discussion around the Access and Participation plan and underrepresented groups and what the College is doing to support, including with regard to digital literacy and poverty.

MV stated that she found the SAR validation process extremely helpful and encouraged Governors to attend 8/9 December, even if for just part of a session. SB to provide JC with schedule for circulation to Governors. ACTION

195. Student Union Update

JM gave a verbal Student Union Update and highlighted:

A positive feeling about how Covid 19 is being handled. In HE Student Council it was noted they were more worried about chips. It was noted that there is a common trend regarding communication around what is happening with Covid 19 and how to regularly update students on it with a changing position. It was noted that SU focus is on wellbeing and mental health for residential students and providing events and entertainment, such as Halloween celebrations including pumpkin carving and horror movies. Working on FE and HE ambassadors to do more outreach with other campuses.

MV stated she thought they were doing a really good job in a difficult position and looks forward to hearing how they get on.

DL asked if instead of email communication could happen via Facebook or WhatsApp. It was noted that there is a College and SU Facebook page and Text Magic.

196. Governor Committees and Activities

Members agreed that aspects of minute 196 should be classified as confidential on the grounds of commercial sensitivity and reviewed in one year. The minutes and associated reports are therefore not available for circulation to the public, college staff or students (excluding senior post holders), along with any draft documents.

College Company Meeting 21 September 2020

Consideration was given to the College Company recommendations and update from 21 September 2020.

The following was noted:

- RBRU better than budget. Wildlife Park and Enterprises in line with budget.
- Monitoring Covid impact on the Wildlife Park.
- IoT deadline extended to July '21.
- Digital Skills Report and proposed capital grant expenditure to be produced for F&GP Committee. ACTION
- VLE Strategy to improve online learning accelerated due to Covid 19, working with IT and considering cost or resourcing.

Search and Governance Committee 2020

Consideration was given to the Search and Governance recommendations and update from 6 October 2020.

The following was noted:

- Committee will retain Search and Governance Function
- **Recommendation:** Extend Terms of Office for GO, CM and LH

Resolved: The Corporation approved the extension of the Terms of Office for GO, CM and LH.

- Invite Governors to Virtual Learning Walks
- Reconsider Departmental Briefings to more cross college functions, such as EDI Committee
- Individual Governor Self Assessments to be organised with Committee Chairs and then the Chairs with the Chair of Corporation as last year, but all virtually. ACTION
- **Recommendation:** Change structure of College Companies so operational with reporting function to Corporation.

Resolved: The Corporation approved a move to a change in structure of the College Companies, so operational, with reporting function to the Corporation. ACTION

JC also reminded Governors that the Corporation are due to elect the Chair of Corporation at the beginning of the year and nomination information will be circulated. It was noted that MV is eligible to stand again, but MV stated she would not stand in anyone's way if they wanted to put themselves forward. ACTION

JC notified the Corporation that recruitment is underway for an Academic and Non Academic Staff Governor.

Audit Committee Meeting 6 October 2020

Consideration was given to the Audit Committee recommendations and update from 6 October 2020.

- TS appointed Chair.
- Thanks expressed to PM and contribution made.

- Internal Auditors, Haines Watts audit opinion based on reviews for 2019/20 is that the College has adequate and effective risk management, governance and control processes which is as good as it gets.
- Audits taking place remotely, but not affecting auditor's confidence.
- **Recommendation:** Internal Audit Plan, following consultation with management on the number of days.

Resolved: The Corporation approved the Internal Audit Plan, following consultation with management on the number of days. ACTION

- New Post 16 Audit Code of Practice setting out the Education and Skills Funding Agency's (ESFA's) assurance and accountability requirements, alongside their funding agreements.
- **Recommendation:** Regularity Self Assessment Questionnaire and supplementary bulletin subject to some further amendments to strengthen it, but not fundamental changes.

Resolved: The Corporation approved the Regularity Self Assessment Questionnaire and Supplementary Bulletin, subject to the further amendments to strengthen it.

- Progress being made with the Risk Register. Further alterations to be made. Need to look at Risk Appetite of the Corporation.
- Has there been any fraud, irregularities, impropriety or whistleblowing incidences requiring the College's attention since the last meeting? and Has there been any overseas expenses? to be added to future agendas.
- Noted reports on P&P and GDPR.

Individual Governor Activities

It was noted that Governors had been involved in the EDI Committee and attended the AoC Governors Online Conference.

EW reported that the EDI Committee has advanced, particularly with data under SB leadership.

GO reported he had attended the Governors Online Conference and various presentations on the state of the sector financially and in relation to the pandemic, particularly in relation to Covid experiences and was confident and reassured the College is doing a good job.

197. Risk Register updates from meeting

Consideration was given to the Strategic Risk Register as had been presented to the Audit Committee. It was noted that further changes were due to be made, eg splitting out Covid risk and Business continuity. There were no additional updates to the Risk Register.

198. Confidential Items

Members agreed that minutes 191, 192, 193 and 196 should be classified as confidential on the grounds of commercial sensitivity and reviewed in one year. The minutes and associated reports are therefore not available for circulation to the public, college staff or students (excluding senior post holders), along with any draft documents.

199. Date of next meeting:

Resolved: 17 December 2020.

For Information

It was noted that the following documents were provided for information:

FEC Diagnostic Assessment Report from July 2020

FEC Termly letter.

200. Any Other Business

The meeting was followed by an Away Day to discuss the long term vision of the College.

I certify that this is a true and accurate record of the meeting held 15 October 2020 and agree to them being made public on the Askham Bryan website.

Signed
Chair

Date

Date Action Raised	Minute No	Action required	Action by	By when
Current				
15/10/20	194	Circulate SAR Landex Validation schedule	SB/JC	ASAP
15/10/20	196	Capital grant expenditure report to be on agenda for F&GP Committee	EB	9/11
15/10/20	196	Organise individual governor self assessments	JC	Autumn Term
15/10/20	196	Move to a change in structure of the College Companies, so operational, with reporting function to the Corporation	JC/EB	ASAP
15/10/20	196	Circulate Chair nomination forms	JC	Dec 20
15/10/20	196	Discuss Internal Audit Plan number of days	Exec	ASAP
Pending				
20/7/20	174	Review confidential minutes	JC	ASAP
18/5/20	166	Consider how Governor departmental visits can take place virtually and how Governors could input in the future. 20/7 It was noted that emails have been sent. If Governors have not already undertaken their visit, to be picked up next year.	TW/SB	ASAP
9/3/20	147	Context to mean and median outcome in Gender Pay Gap report to be provided in the report for next year.	TW/RH	March '21
9/3/20	147	Include lower quartile in pay strategy and include financial implications.	TW/RH	ASAP
9/3/20	148	Organise a training session for Governors on the IFM, financial health context and funding streams.	JC/PM/EB	ASAP
9/3/20	149	Organise an EIF presentation for Corporation.	JC/SB	ASAP
9/3/20	151	Review sector advice for EU students and fees from September 2021. 20/7 It was noted that Norwegian students will not attend College in 20/21.	SS/SB	ASAP
18/10/19	120	Include Moodle access as part of board portal project.	JC	ASAP
22/07/19	100	Arrange a presentation from marketing on how effective the function is. 18/10 in new year.	TW/JC	ASAP
22/07/19	100	Corporation members to undertake cyber security training during the board portal process.	JC/Governors	ASAP
Cleared				
20/7/20	178	Circulate final ESFA Financial Return	EB	ASAP
20/7/20	181	Circulate final College Opening Plan, Risk Assessment and DfE checklist	SB	ASAP

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Signed
Chair

Date