

Askham Bryan College Corporation

Corporation Meeting

**Minutes of the meeting held
Monday 17 May 2021 – 3.00pm-5.25pm
via Microsoft Teams**

250. Attendees

Declan Whelan (DW) – Non Academic Staff Governor, Mike Galloway (MG), Linda Haigh (LH), Annabel Jelley (AJ), David Lynch (DL), Martin Moorhouse (MM), James Mullen (JM) – Student Governor/SU President, 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, John Williams (JW) - Deputy Corporation Chair and Chris Moss (CM) – Co-optee.

In attendance: Emma Barbery (EB) – Chief Finance Officer, Sandra Burnhill (SB) – Vice Principal, Judith Clapham (JC) – Director of Governance, Sharon Sheppard (SS) – Vice Principal.

Acceptance of apologies for absence: Emma Wilkins (EW), Nick Lawton (NL) – Academic Staff Governor. (NL temporarily joined the meeting during the Strategy item).

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.

251. Declarations of Interest

There were no changes to the Declarations of Interest as detailed in the register, 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
- MG as a University of York Court 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.

252. Meetings of the minutes held 15 March 2021

Resolved: The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record to be signed by MV as Chair accepting the following changes in the confidential minutes as marked on the draft.

253. Matters Arising/Action Schedule

The Action Schedule was updated.

254. Chair Report

MV stated that she felt energised and optimistic regarding the College, with students back and finances on track and is hoping the next meeting will be at College.

MV reported that a new agenda item, special focus had been introduced (FE White Paper this meeting), to hopefully focus on the future/strategic topic (eg sustainability, equality and diversity, mental health, student journey) and create the space for discussion which was seen at the twilight sessions.

255. Chief Executive Report

Members agreed that aspects of minute 255 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 Chief Executive Report (College Leadership and Governance - Leadership arrangements, strategy, Covid 19, FEC Diagnostic Assessment), Finance (financial performance, VAT), Student Recruitment, Curriculum, Quality and Performance, Student Services, Estates and Resources (Digital Skills Academy, Yorkshire and Humberside Institute of Technology, ESFA Capital Grant), Legal and Compliance (Risk Management, Data Protection and GDPR), Staffing (Newton Rigg, Covid 19, staff survey), External Relations and Engagement (media management, key stakeholders, FE White Paper/Land based Education Review).

TW provided an update on the following:

- RAG rating of the issues in his report with a monetary value where appropriate, but that it does not relate to the Risk Register scoring.
- Leadership arrangements, with a significant stretch around covid 19 and Newton Rigg, but is improving. Executive coaching now engaged.
- There have been over 10k lateral flow tests, with seven positives. Face coverings remain.
- Awaiting FEC Diagnostic Assessment report.
- Financial performance improving and VAT position is being managed effectively.
- Recruitment looks positive for FE and HE, with applications for FE slightly ahead and acceptances ahead compared to last year and for HE slightly ahead. It was noted that there has been an issue with offers, due to a staffing issue which is now resolved.
- Curriculum and performance is amber as awaiting final synoptic testing.
- No concern student issues.
- From an estates perspective all three projects (Digital Skills, IoT and ESFA Capital) are on track.
- Risk Management becoming more embedded.
- Data Protection/GDPR Cyber Essentials on track to be followed by Cyber Essentials Plus.
- Staff Survey at amber as the participation rate has fallen. Overall staff satisfaction is at 7.1. Strategies in place in the People Plan.
- FE White Paper potential could have significant impact on the FE Sector and landbased education, but fully engaged in activities. It was noted that Robbie Moore had visited the College.

AJ asked about the RAG ratings. It was noted they are based on a crude subjective assessment. MV stated she liked the RAG rating as provides an indication of where the concerns are.

AJ asked about the Estates Strategy and concern that it is not showing on the RAG rating.

MG thanked TW for the comprehensive report, but expressed concern regarding the report representing growth and the strategy being based on growth in terms of demographics and market share, as the numbers do not appear to represent this, as numbers will be lost from Newton Rigg. TW stated that the growth was on the baseline without Newton Rigg.

MG further asked for a projection of those progressing to be able to see the full picture and to be able to scrutinise the figures. ACTION

MG asked about the Digital Strategy and associated posts. It was noted that there was a draft Digital Teaching and Learning Strategy. ACTION include in Q&S. MV stated that she did not think it was Corporation's role to be involved in operations. MG thought the Strategy was relevant for Quality and Standards Committee.

GO asked if Covid impacted on the recruitment last year and distorted the figures. SS stated that it did impact last year, but applications, offers and accepts are higher as a result of interviewing more quickly, so the impact has already happened and coming to the end of the cycle.

GO further asked about whether there have been more gains or is it that it has been a better process. SS stated that the College needs to get through the Assessment Boards, but thinks it will be a small increase. Currently predicting 14%, but is reliant on Assessment Boards and Centre assessed grades.

256. Strategy

Members agreed that aspects of minute 256 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.

Strategy Update

TW stated that following the wider College Strategy being approved at the last Corporation meeting, there have been a couple of SLT sessions and sessions are planned with the wider staff during Colleague Engagement Week. Metrics will come via the Committee structure with final sign off at the July Corporation meeting.

TW stated that the four operational plans (Curriculum, Estates, People and Finance) are also due to come to the Committees and will be rolled out at the Graduation Event.

Estates (Transformational Fund)/Newton Rigg

Consideration was given to the report on the Transformational Fund. It was noted that an application for the Further Education Capital Transformation Fund (FECTF) was submitted on 22 March 2021. The FECTF gives FE colleges the opportunity to bid for investment in capital projects that address the upgrading of their FE estate to address condition need. The application process is in two stages, the college will be informed if it has been successful in its stage 1 bid on 14 May, now 21 May. Stage 2 submissions are then due on 30 July 2021 with the outcome available to colleges week commencing 27 September 2021. To ensure a strong submission and to increase the probability of success, it is recommended that a professional bid writer is brought in to assist with the Stage 2 bid.

EB reported that she had spoken to AJ at length following the last Corporation meeting. It was noted that at the FEC Diagnostic Assessment that had taken place 2 days after the last Corporation meeting where there was a strong steer to submit an application. It was noted that

the application was based on the condition of the buildings. Further conversations then took place with MG and JW before final submission.

TW stated that once know the outcome of Stage 1 colleagues will work with the Corporation on and bring in a bid writer.

AJ stated she was pleased a bid has been submitted and was right to base it on the condition of the building. AJ stated she would be happy to be part of a Task and Finish Group for the whole of the campus and a wider view, eg entrance, zoning and the College Master Plan for the future.

TW stated that regardless if get the funding, the work needs to happen and their needs to be wider ambition plans and partners, with involvement from Corporation.

MV stated that the College has moved to being more strategic and moving to the long term which is exciting and the Corporation has a role to play in supporting the Executive to do this, but cannot do everything today.

Newton Rigg Update

TW reported that the farms and campus went on the market 4 May and that Savills report good interest with viewings taking place. 17 June final bid deadline, with a meeting planned for 21 June.

TW reported that the College is working with Ullswater and Mysercough.

257. FE White Paper Presentation

SS and SB delivered a presentation to the Corporation on the FE White Paper, 'Skills for Jobs: Lifelong Learning Opportunities and Growth,' published in January 2021 setting out the future approach and likely environment for the Further Education sector.

The White Paper establishes five core principles to deliver skills for jobs.

1. Putting **employers at the heart of skills system** so that education & training leads to jobs that improve productivity and fill skills gaps.
2. Investing in **higher-level technical qualifications** that provide a valuable alternative to a university degree.
3. Making sure people can access training and **learning flexibly** throughout their lives and are well-informed about what is on offer through great careers support.
4. **Reforming funding and accountability** to simplify how funds are allocated, give providers more autonomy, and deliver value for money.
5. Supporting **excellent teaching** in further education.

It was thought that the College was well placed as a specialist College with strong links to employers/industry and needs to capitalise the opportunity and is good to see FE on the government agenda.

JW asked about how deal with involvement with the Chamber of Commerce. It was noted that they do not have the infrastructure and might not be the right mechanism. It was noted that the College has a national strategy and is impacted by devolution.

TW reported that the majority of the businesses the College deals with are micro businesses and that there needs to be some understanding of this.

MV suggested this is a real opportunity if can get ahead of the game and asked if there is a role for Landex. It was thought that there was and they are engaged with the land based review.

LH asked about the sector we serve and therefore does it have limited benefit in terms of growth. What is the opportunity for us within this? TW stated for us and Landex it is to influence the qualification and funding frameworks so there is stability and so not reactionary. It could be positive. There will be regional leads on skills. Skills accelerator work provides an opportunity for Colleges to work more closely together. There will be Government intervention if Colleges do not deliver to the regional/local skills requirements.

SS stated that with regard to T-Levels and from an Animal Management perspective, some facilities will not be adequate to deliver the industry led facilities to get approval to run the qualifications, so land based Colleges with the appropriate education should be able to deliver the high quality provision.

SB stated that they will make us accountable to the skills in the local area. What is exciting is being able to shape the provision and skills need going forward.

TS stated that a lot sounds familiar around Regional Development agencies and employer led. With the College large agenda there is a resonance with our strategy, but a concern that local funding with a national agenda could cause us an issue. It would be helpful to identify which parts of it are of benefit to us as do not have the resources to do it all.

MV asked if there are any downsides, eg adults, continuing education. TS expressed a concern over it being employer driven as in the past they may not see the same priorities or have the infrastructure or resource. It was noted that it will depend on how it is implemented and will be beneficial to align to the areas that we are trying to achieve anyway.

Thanks were expressed to SS and SB.

AJ left the meeting.

258. Finance

Management Accounts/Financial Forecast

Consideration was given to the Management Accounts for Period 8.

2020/2021 Financial Performance: Period 8 management accounts indicate that the College remains positive to the Q2 forecast position. Headline College results for the 8 months ended 31 March 2021; with a positive variance to income.

The Q3 forecast will be completed in May 2021 in conjunction with scheduled performance reviews, based on year to date performance the forecast outturn is likely to be better in terms of bottom line (surplus/reduced deficit) and cash in the bank.

EB reported that P9 is currently looking in line with this. EB stated that some of this is due to covid and it will be difficult next year to understand what is a normal/standard year and being able to budget accordingly.

EB reported that cash is looking favourable at 42 cash days and in line with forecast.

259. Student Union Verbal Report

JM reported:

- that the SU have been involved in buildings and projects and a lot of litter picking and involving students.
- Opened a bottle bar to try and keep students on site.

- Next year working on building a rapport with the local community.
- Face masks are being worn.

260. Curriculum

Q&S Committee Meeting 26 April 2021

Consideration was given to the Quality and Standards Committee Meeting Minutes from 26 April 2021

MG reported on the key messages/risks:

- Meeting was more focussed and making progress with the quality of the papers
- Covid 19 – most students are back on site. College should be applauded for how the College has reacted
- There will be teacher assessed grades
- Performance Reviews – red risk for achievement at Newton Rigg and the withdrawal from Newton Rigg is red risk for most support departments. Working on giving students the best student experience in their final year
- English and Maths attendance has been an issue
- Student Recruitment as reported in CEO Report
- Receive a report on HR and the People Plan which is central. Staff recruitment becoming more difficult so need to keep an eye on this to ensure get the right people for the roles
- Historic pensions issue relating to those in the wrong scheme and working on a quantum in relation to individuals affected so can inform them accurately
- Anticipating pedagogical needs skills experience and knowledge of students coming through due to teacher assessed grades and experience in covid. Adjustment to account for this and putting systems in place to make some early judgements.

JM and JWe left the meeting.

- Needing to be alert to online radicalisation and the demographic isolated rural areas.

KPIs

Consideration was given to the FE and HE KPI reports.

261. College Company Meeting 22 March 2021

Consideration was given to the College Company Meeting Minutes from 22 March 2021 meeting.

GO highlighted the main message to the Corporation that an action plan and timeline is to be produced for a resolution to Company Structure in 21/22 academic year – 2-3 months following Newton Rigg.

TS stated that when come to review it, will it look at the relationship with the holding company and how it works and level of independence, so a proper working relationship in both good and bad times and does not leave Directors vulnerable.

262. Risk Register

Consideration was given to the Risk Register.

JW asked about the Covid risk. It was noted that it is an assessment at a point in time. It was noted that the Risk Register and Risk Appetite is a work in progress and reviewed at each Audit Committee Meeting. EB stated that it is slightly less as it is a known risk, whereas another event is not known.

TW reported that the register is reviewed at SLT and at the Audit Committee will be recommending scores are reduced.

263. Governor Activities

MV reported that she visits the College every two weeks for a catch up.

JW reported that there had been various meetings of the Task and Finish Group which is working well.

JW asked if anyone is interested in undertaking the Safeguarding role and link.

264. 2021/22 Meeting Dates

Resolved: The Corporation approved the 21/22 Meeting dates. It was noted that the January Corporation meeting may not need to happen.

DW, JM, JWe, EB, SB, SS, CM left the meeting, leaving MG, LH, DL, MM, GO, TS, MV, TW, JW and JC.

265. Confidential Items

Members agreed that aspects of minutes 255, 256 and 265 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.

266. Any Other Business

None.

267. Date of next meeting:

Resolved: 19 July 2021 as a live meeting, if possible.

I certify that this is a true and accurate record of the meeting held 17 May 2021 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				
17/05/21	255	Include progression data for student numbers for assessment at Q&S Committee	SS	1/7
17/05/21	255	Include Digital Strategy for Q&S Committee	SB	1/7
Pending				
15/03/21	240	Include more diverse imagery in the Strategic Plan 2021-26	TW	Before publication
15/03/21	248	Consider ways for AJ to be involved in EDI Committee, Q&S	AJ/JC	ASAP
15/03/21	248	Consider ways of increasing ethnic diversity and other forms of diversity across the organisation. TW to work with Landex too	All	ASAP
15/03/21	248	Make staff more prominent in the 9 priority areas	TW/JC	ASAP
15/03/21	248	Re-evaluate how HR matters are reported to the Corporation and via which committees	JC	ASAP
15/10/20	196	Organise individual governor self assessments	JC	Autumn Term
20/7/20	174	Review confidential minutes	JC	ASAP
18/10/19	120	Include Moodle access as part of board portal project.	JC	ASAP
22/07/19	100	Corporation members to undertake cyber security training during the board portal process.	JC/Governors	ASAP
Cleared				
15/03/21	239	Feedback to University regarding inviting Corporation members to future Bio Yorkshire events	TW	ASAP

I certify that this is a true and accurate record of the meeting held 17 May 2021 and agree to them being made public on the Askham Bryan website.

Signed
Chair

Date