

Askham Bryan College Corporation

Corporation Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held

Monday 23 May 2022 – 3.00pm-5.30pm

Committee Room, Askham Bryan College, York/Via Microsoft Teams

63. Attendees

Linda Haigh (LH), Annabel Jelley (AJ) via Teams, David Lynch (DL), Martin Moorhouse (MM), Graeme Osborn (GO), Maureen Vevers (MV) - Corporation Chair, Jordan Webster (JWe) – Student Governor/SU President, John Williams (JW) – Vice Corporation Chair, Tim Whitaker (TW) – Principal/Chief Executive Officer/Accounting Officer, Emma Wilkins (EW) and Chris Moss (CM) – Co-optee via Teams.

In attendance: Emma Barbery (EB) – Chief Finance Officer, Laura Black (LB -) – Interim Vice Principal, Sandra Burnhill (SB) – Vice Principal, Iain Glendinning (IG) – Interim Vice Principal and Judith Clapham (JC) – Director of Governance.

LB was welcomed to her first meeting.

Acceptance of apologies for absence: Trevor Shaw (TS)

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.

64. Declarations of Interest

Consideration was given to the Register of Interests.

MV advised that she was no longer an Advisory Board Member for the University of York Archaeology Department and her husband, Andrew Vevers was a Fulford Parish Councillor

There were no further 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, GO and MM as Directors of ABC College Co Ltd and ABC Enterprises Ltd.
- TW as a Landex Director.
- JW as a Governor at Bradford College.
- MV as a University of York Court Member. Husband, Andrew Vevers Fulford Parish Councillor.
- DL stated that Andrew Jackson acts for the Natwest Bank where DL is employed.
- AJ declared that as a consultant in the sector she is Interim Head of the North Yorkshire IOT which the College is part of.

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.

65. Minutes of the Meetings held 24 January and 14 March 2022

Resolved: The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record following the addition of items for 14 March 2022 as marked on the draft, to be signed by MV as Chair.

66. Matters Arising/Action Schedule

The Action Schedule was updated.

AJ and CM joined the meeting via Microsoft Teams.

67. Chair's Verbal Report

MV reported:

- That she thought the Away Day had provided a new energy and it was great to be back face to face.
- Along with TS and GO, she had attended the HE Poster Day and it was great to see the students and their work.
- She had visited the Digital Learning Centre which is awaiting to be fitted out and a tour for Governors will be arranged ahead of the next meeting to see it and the IoT.
- At the University of York Court Meeting they talked about Bio Yorkshire and mentioned Askham Bryan College, with Charlie Jeffrey –Vice Chancellor being very positive.

Consideration was given to the FEC letter to Chairs and Principals, dated 30 March 2022. It was noted that they want to be more supportive and work with a wider group of Colleges. JW stated that he had heard the FEC talk at the AoC and thought the focus was changing.

68. Chief Executive's Report

TW highlighted the following:

- Laura Black started as interim Vice Principal (HE, Adult, Outreach and Commercial) 3 May and is settling in well.
- Curriculum Restructure process has progressed and looking at a post restructure implementation plan. It has had a wide impact across the College.
- Staff recruitment continues to be an issue across the sector. A staff pay and reward review continues.
- Investors in People process has commenced and the baseline will be used to inform the College cultural journey.
- External engagement work continues with key stakeholders across a variety of initiatives.
- Devolution in the region will be announced in July.

JW asked about the visit from Meredydd David. It was noted that he came to view the estate as part of active support and his focus was on master planning for the estate and he has provided a follow up report.

- The College awaits a no notice Care Standards inspection and main inspection under the new EIF.
- Work continues on the campus development. A Campus Development Oversight Group with Governor oversight is proposed.
- Q3 forecast is in line with Q2.
- Student recruitment is positive. 5% up on acceptances for 16-19 and HE is looking slightly up.
- Work is being undertaken on the Risk Register in relation to Risk Appetite.
- Joey Rogers has started as the new Farm Manager and understands the link with curriculum, which is encouraging. GO welcomed this news. ACTION organise viewing of the beef unit.
- The College has won two awards at the recent Educate North Awards, Community Engagement Award and Business Collaborations and Partnership Award.
- Footpath enquiry continues and will be heard in June and mitigating risks as best can, but is a risk and has potential implications for the College Zoo licence.

- The College has seen a rise in complaints and legal challenge which is the case across the sector, particularly connected to EHCP and expectations from students and parents and what the College is able to deliver.

JW asked if the complaints are aimed at us or because of the Local Authority System. The frustrating system for students and parents was thought to be a factor.

69. Student Union Report

Consideration was given to the Student Union Report.

JWe highlighted the following:

- Student mental health – support lines are in place and when do get help it has been really good, but can be hard to get help and can feel isolated and alone. Positive about a Wellbeing Coordinator and SU support eg in offering activities.
- Applying mitigating circumstances can be confusing, so needs to be a focus at the beginning of the year.
- Student Voice through the new format Student Council highlighted some behavioural issues and some safety that are being addressed eg lighting areas, plus catering.
- Student Experience – events have been downsized and events seen as positive, but not being at the beginning of the year has impacted, so need to engage with students early in the year and also have SU representatives from the different course areas so involved across the whole College as important to operate as a team. Social media has helped with advertising events. The last HE event tied in with Best of British and Jubilee and had a good turnout. The student induction and how a year starts with engagement of all students was recognised as important.
- Raised £500 for charity through RAG week.
- Working on an event to tie in with Awards Ceremonies.

MV stated that she thought it was a positive and thoughtful report.

JW asked about the normal route of communication. It was noted it is either through the SU or residential wardens.

LH asked if there is any unmet need in terms of mental health. JWe stated he did not think so. MM stated that he's seen that 92% under age 40 have mental health issues. JWe stated that planning work has started and involving Andy's Club early in the year.

70. Strategy

Key Corporate Measures and Targets

Consideration was given to the Key Corporate Measures and Targets.

TW highlighted:

- that the technical exam pass rates were low. IG reported that some of the questions have been queried through City and Guilds on the Animal Management and Agriculture papers and this is being investigated.
- Recruitment live enrolments are 1.5% off target, but should hit the 3475 target.
- Early SPOC reports indicate a dip in satisfaction.
- The internal NSS came out at 78%, but official scores not out until July.
- Digital learning is where it needs to be.
- A report on the VIP stakeholder and perception of the College will be presented to the Q&S Committee in June.

- The commercial offer has been impacted by covid, but is being addressed with an action plan.
- Operating position expected to outturn at .8%
- Sustainability not progressed as far as would like, so more work to be progressed in this area.
- Investors in People implementing in this year.

There will be a proposal to the July Corporation meeting to amend live enrolments and digital learning as JISC released their digital elevation model.

It was noted that an article from Stacy Vipas is on the Jisc website.

Campus Development Oversight Group (Askham Bryan College Task and Finish Group)
Consideration was given Campus Development Oversight Group Report.

TW reported that a lot of work has been undertaken on the strategy and the Estates Plan and developing an overall Campus Masterplan and that there are a number of work streams, so it is proposed that a Campus Development Oversight Group (Task and Finish Group), including senior leaders, with Governor input and external input too is formed, so there is oversight of the delivery of the Estates Plan.

LH queried how it fitted with sustainability and having a similar group for this too.

TW stated that sustainability will be part of it. ACTION write sustainability in to the Terms of Reference for the group.

GO queried if it is really another Corporation Committee. It was confirmed that it is more in line with a Task and Finish Group, as a group to oversee delivery, similar to that for Newton Rigg, to ensure it aligns to the strategy, but it also needs to report through the Committee/Corporation structure. MM suggested considering the Terms of Reference in relation to the F&GP Committee. ACTION

JW asked about the oversight group in relation to the stakeholder groups. TW explained that the oversight group will look at it at a high level whereas the other groups will be about operational/implementation.

JC to liaise with Governors to sit on the Group.

Resolved: The Corporation agreed to the Campus Development Oversight Group being established.

71. Special Focus Topic Curriculum Strategy, Quality of Learning, Ofsted update relating to Governors, College position and potential risks – Feedback from twilight sessions and any further questions

It was noted that two twilight sessions took place 9 May and 16 May, the notes from which SB will produce further guidance for Governors. It was noted that LH had also provided feedback.

MV asked about the local, regional and national skills agenda. TW stated the College has a good story to tell. SB highlighted the impact on learners and how employer links provide a better student experience. IG stated that students, teachers, managers and leaders need to be able to articulate the journey, eg about the Teacher Ed Plan so teachers are properly prepared and engaged and quality expectations, how inform the education offer and how can evidence it,

what we are doing well, not so well and the action plan. Skills to be the special focus topic at the July Corporation meeting.

72. Finance

Management Accounts P8 inc Financial Forecast

Consideration was given to the Management Accounts for Period 8, showing a forecast surplus position.

EB reported that the Q3 forecast is in line with the Q2 forecast, with a surplus which will likely be better.

MM asked about the redundancy costs. It was noted that in P9 they are included.

GO stated that it was good that the farm is tracking in line with the budget. It was noted that the milk price is strong and is forecast to go upwards.

DL asked about the policy for sustainability. It was noted that the Farm forwards buys for preferential price.

JW asked if the cashflow covenant is tested annually and the rest quarterly. EB confirmed.

JW asked about the T-Level grant. It was noted if successful it is for delivery in September 2023.

There was a break.

73. Curriculum

FE Update

Consideration was given to the FE Update.

IG highlighted the following:

- There have been 12 deep dives in curriculum areas with Curriculum Managers leading the deep dives, with a focus on teaching and learning. 4 graded as good. Subject knowledge is the key strength. 83% performing good or better. Areas to work on - monitor student progress against targets and formative and summative assessment, planning and preparation, teaching and learning programme technical results.
- Providing intense support for the next technical exams in June. It has been a real challenge to coach for exams, as students out of practice due to covid.
- Achievement is at 83%.
- Retention is on track. Saltaire done much better.
- Area for improvement - poor attendance in some areas. Need to identify students at risk.
- 7% increase in accepts at York compared to this time last year, but aware some students are applying for a number of different Colleges.

MM asked about the quality of teaching and learning. TW stated the aim of the restructure is to improve the quality of teaching and learning, for example with the teacher qualification programme and progress tutors.

LH stated there is some inconsistency between outstanding and some requires improvement. IG explained there is one week notice internally and then the deep dive. If they require improvement they have monitoring visits planned in too. RAG rating is used to drive the quality offer. The internal deep dive mirrors an Ofsted deep dive and then look at improving.

EW asked how plan for growth and impact on staff. IG in Curriculum Plan shows planned growth. In February check courses against the staffing and how well recruiting and add in cover and back fill.

JW asked about English and Maths on the various tables and the four different columns which show massive changes and what are the significance of them. It was noted it is a split between vocational maths and English. ACTION IG to identify.

HE Update

Consideration was given to the HE Update.

SB highlighted that the College has been successful in achieving Foundation Degree Awarding Powers, which is a significant point in the College's development and is being built on.

Retention is currently at 95%, but could be further attrition at the assessment boards.

EW asked if she has interpreted it right that more students wish to progress. It was noted that a lot of work has been undertaken on this.

Peer Review

Consideration was given to the Landex Peer Review.

It was noted that the peer review took place over two days 31st March and 1st April with a quality reviewer from Landex and a Dean of HE. The focus of the visit was Higher Education.

Landex undertook a series of meetings with managers. The focus of the meetings was quality assurance, HE strategy, overall college quality procedures, teacher development, student support and marketing/Access and Participation plan. There was positive feedback from the peer reviewers around the teacher development programme, student support, the access and participation and the college ambition to widen participation to students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The meeting with students gave the college useful feedback around the areas to consider around the HE experience in an FEI. The reviews conducted a series of learning walks and observations of teaching and learning. There are areas for improvement for the college to action around the level and research led teaching. The recommendations will be actioned in the HE quality improvement plan.

Residential Review

The peer review took place over the same two days as the Higher Education Review above. The Landex reviewer for our under 18 residential provision (a Vice Principal from Hartpury), was very complimentary in her feedback about many areas of our provision, particularly the staff that she met and the students. The staff represented the wide range of colleagues who are involved with the provision, including the Accommodation Team, Student Services and wardens but also members of curriculum staff, who could demonstrate the close working relationship between staff to support students who are residential. The review did highlight some key areas for review. All the recommendations have been incorporated into the Residential Quality Improvement Plan.

74. Governor Activities/Training

It was noted that a number of Departmental Briefings have taken place, with a number also planned.

EW reported that she had undertaken her Departmental Briefing in People Services, which had been incredibly positive.

GO reported that he had undertaken his Departmental Briefings in learning support, learning resources and Student Services and thanked staff for their time. GO stated that whilst there are a lot of external challenges, he had confidence the College is doing the best it can in a difficult environment nationally.

DL reported that he had undertaken his Departmental Briefing with RBRU, who collate the National Farmer Survey data from farms. The contract is due for renewal in 2023. 6 groups make up the national RBRU, which are predominantly university led. The strength is the relationship with the farmers, staff in the unit and their specialisms. DL wondered if there is a possibility of integrating RBRU further in the College as they have a unique platform with farmers, but recognised the sensitivities regarding the data position. A return visit is due in October. DL also stated that he had a positive experience with the welcome at reception.

75. Draft Corporation Meeting Dates 2022/23 and Cycle of Business

Consideration was given to the Draft Corporation Meeting Dates 2022/23 and Cycle of Business which were accepted.

It was noted that the date for the Remuneration Committee will be moved to late May/early June to align with AoC Data being available and early F&GP and Q&S Committee dates are to be planned in depending on need.

76. College Company 21 March 2022

Consideration was given to the College Company Meeting minutes from 21 March 2022.

MM highlighted:

- The Farm Principles including sustainability and education.
- Rise in utility costs is a concern in 2023.
- Smartstable which the College is a Director of are looking to gift the remainder of the capital in the business to the College to be used by students as an Innovation Development Fund, using a Memorandum of Understanding.
- Velcourt Farm Manager – Joey Rodgers has been appointed.

JW asked about the use of land for grazing horses. EB reported it is in hand and being sorted.

Resolved:

- Recharge of farm costs to curriculum to be reflected in contribution paper by Q3 for 21/22.
- Complete the review on general ledger intercompany balances including outcome from Newton Rigg and closure of associated farm bank account by Easter 2022.
- Appoint PwC to undertake the proposed work in the summer term in line with the commencement of the new financial year 1/8/22.
- Obtain interest/quote from PwC to manage Corporation Tax computations to consolidate support and advice on tax matters.

77. Risk Register

Consideration was given to the Risk Register. It was noted that detailed work is being undertaken with regard to the current risk score and risk appetite.

TW, EB, LB, SB, IG and JC left the meeting at 5.15pm.

78. Remuneration Committee 9 May and 20 May 2022

EB reported to the Corporation on the Remuneration Committee meetings, 9 May and 20 May 2022.

79. Confidential Items

Members agreed that aspects of minutes 68, 69, 72, 73, 74 and 78 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.

80. Any Other Business

None.

81. Date of next meeting:

Resolved: Confirmed as 13 July 2022 (note change in date).

I certify that this is a true and accurate record of the meeting held 23 May 2022 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				
07/07/22	68	Organise tour prior to the next Corporation meeting to include the IoT, Digital Skills and Beef Unit.	TW	13/07
07/07/22	70	Add Sustainability to Campus Development Oversight Group ToR and cross reference to the F&GP Committee.	TW	First meeting of group
07/07/22	73	Identify in the Maths tables what the differences are.	IG	13/07
Pending				
14/03/22	56	Look at the Gender Pay Gap quartiles and provide some benchmark data so Corporation can understand if where the College is, is acceptable.	LG	31/3/23
20/12/21	29	Include Student comments in to Estates Strategy. 24/1 have factored in points covered by the strategy and will keep students informed. When revise strategy will include.	EB	24/01/22
15/03/21	248	Consider ways of increasing ethnic diversity and other forms of diversity across the organisation. TW to work with Landex too. 14/10 this work is ongoing, via the EDI Committee and in terms of Governance through the recruitment processes.	All	07/22
22/07/19	100	Corporation members to undertake cyber security training during the board portal process.	JC/Governors	07/22
14/10/21	8	Consider having a Corporation Meeting at Stewart Park, Middlesbrough. 20/12 potentially the March Away Day.	MV/JC	05/22
Cleared				
14/10/21	7	Put Company Structure Work in to a work stream. 20/12 College Company providing oversight.	TW	31/10
20/12/21	35	Organise tour of wider College Estate.	TW/JC	Summer /Autumn Term
14/03/22	58	Check why any proposed pay award is considered in February and not before. 23/5 It was noted it is in line with budget processes.	JC/EB	

I certify that this is a true and accurate record of the meeting held 23 May 2022 and agree to them being made public on the Askham Bryan website.

Signed
Chair

Date