



**CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE
BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY 19th MARCH 2018**

Present: Paul Smyth (Chair), Lucky Ali, Anna Barnish, Andrew Davies, Joanne Finnerty, Lorraine Jones Sue Higginson (Principal), Tim Kelly, James King, Tony Mann, Joe McArdle, Jayne Winders

In attendance: Michael Norton, Deputy Principal
Maura Cummins, Vice Principal – Curriculum and Quality
Steve Cain, Assistant Principal Finance
Ste Bailey, Assistant Principal Student Support and Foundation Learning (min 201 – 207)
Philippa Dickinson, Director of Student Services (min 177 – 178)
Ian James, Clerk to the Governors
Louise Kelly, Administrator to the Governors

APOLOGIES

175. Apologies were received from Gary Doyle, Will Jerram and Richard Mawdsley.

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

176. Tim Kelly declared an interest in the Merseyside Superannuation scheme.

PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE

177. The Director of Student Services attended the meeting to provide the Board with a verbal update on the College's Matrix reaccreditation. Matrix accreditation assessed how well the College provided students with information, advice and guidance with regard to education, training and employment. The reaccreditation visit had gone extremely well and the Matrix Assessor had felt that staff reflected the College's values and that a collaborative approach was apparent. The Assessor had met with students, the Student Services and Employer Services Teams and also with the Safeguarding Staff, who he described as "inspirational." A formal report on the outcome of the reaccreditation would be released in due course.

178. The Principal thanked the Director of Student Services for her leadership of the College's reaccreditation.

179. The Principal and Assistant Principal Finance presented a PowerPoint that explained:

- Bank Covenants and the potential for them to be breached
- Cash forecasts
- Reserves
- How the College's accounts compared to the DfE's recommendations

180. Several new graphs were proposed for inclusion in the management accounts to enable the governors to focus on these issues and the Senior Leadership Team were working together on a clear action plan for May.

SHARING RECENT SUCCESSES

181. The Board received the routine Sharing Recent Success report (copy attached to signed minutes). The Chair commended the Marketing Team's efforts and use of advertising through social media.

BALANCED SCORECARD

182. The Deputy Principal presented the Balanced Scorecard (copy attached to signed minutes). Apprenticeship income, HE Income, Income to plan and Absence Percentage remained as 'red' rated issues. In addition, attendance rates for English and maths on study programmes had also been rated 'red' since the last meeting. The usual exception reports were provided.

183. The governors were advised as to how staff monitored individual students' attendance and on the range of strategies employed to improve attendance. These had achieved a positive impact on attendance on vocational courses but, unfortunately, attendance at English and maths lessons still required improvement.

184. A governor enquired if students had been asked for their feedback and thoughts on English and maths lessons. The Deputy Principal responded that, as a result of meetings with the students, a number of suggestions had been implemented including providing English and maths on students' own campuses and contextualising English and maths to students' courses of study.

185. Attendance at English & maths classes was acknowledged a problem for colleges across the FE sector and the College was in contact with Ofsted-rated Outstanding colleges to share good practice. In addition, the English and Maths Managers would be attending the AoC conference to liaise with other colleges about their approaches to English and maths.

186. The Vice Principal advised that, despite the low attendance rates, students were still achieving earlier and that English Functional Skills students were all completing their final exam this week. Governors acknowledged the amount of effort the College had put in to improving not only attendance but the quality of the teaching and learning in English and maths classes.

187. Governors requested that D3 on the Balanced Scorecard the Pay to Income ratio, be split into two categories:

- D3a: Including Sub-contracting Income
- D3b: Excluding Sub-contracting Income

188. A governor suggested that the sickness data would be more helpful if it was presented as days lost per employee rather than total days lost and this change was agreed.

ANNUAL ANALYSIS OF 2016/17 COMPLAINTS

189. The Vice Principal provided the Annual Analysis of Complaints (copy attached to signed minutes). The College had received 25 official complaints in 2016/17, which was the same figure for 2015/16.

190. A governor queried why an MP had been involved in a complaint and the Vice Principal responded that this was because the MP had been copied in to the original complaint. The Chair asked why the full range of Equality and Diversity protected characteristics was not referenced and this would be examined.

MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS

191. The Assistant Principal Finance presented the Management Accounts (copy attached to signed minutes). There had been no significant change since the mid-year update and the year-end forecast remained a surplus of £10k.

RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE

192. The Deputy Principal provided the Risk Management Update and Risk Register which had previously been reviewed by the Audit Committee (copy attached to signed minutes). The Committee had suggested that a Risk Appetite be included in the Register and that the 'Planning and Curriculum Offer' risk be reduced to amber, given the 'green' opinion on a recent internal audit. Both suggestions had been incorporated in the latest Risk Register.

TIMETABLE OF MEETINGS

193. The Board noted the Timetable of Meetings for 2018/19 (copy attached to signed minutes).

BOARD AND COMMITTEE MINUTES

Board Meeting

194. **Resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on 28th February 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair

Audit Committee

195. The Board received for information, the minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 5th March 2018. The Committee had recommended the reappointment of the internal and external auditors for a further year.

196. **Resolved** that RSM and Wylie & Bisset be reappointed as internal and external auditors respectively for a further year

DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Tuesday 24th April 2018