

**Meeting of the Kendal College Corporation  
Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2016 at 5.00 pm  
Conference Room 1  
MINUTES**

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**Present:**

Joseph Brown (Student Governor)  
Cath Dutton (Chair)  
Jeff Edginton  
Emily Harris  
Zaeed Mohammed (Staff Governor)  
Rebecca Sandham  
Jon Thedham  
John Tiscornia  
Gordon Watson  
Graham Wilkinson (Principal)

(attendance 77 %)

**In attendance:**

Maggie Cawthorn, Carole Drury (Clerk), Craig Owen, Louise Shrapnel

Presentation from Robert Marshall-Slater on recent visit to Hotel School in Brazil

Robert provided an overview, supported by photographic presentation, on his recent visit to Brazil as part of the AoC Principals' Mentoring Programme, where he deputised for the Principal. The trip had included a visit to an international hotel school which provided a high level of training for the industry. The presentation led to a discussion on the previously considered proposal to develop a similar school through the College linked to LEP priorities for Visitor Economy and funding. It was agreed that a business proposal should be worked on for further consideration.

1643 **Apologies for Absence**

Michelle Clement, Ian Clinton (agreed leave of absence), Sam Philipson, Claire Willett

1644 **Declaration of Interests**

J Edginton declared an interest in item 1652 due to a family member on the proposed visit. Z Mohammed declared an interest in item 1652 due to going on the trip.

1645 **To approve the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2016**

The minutes of the meeting of 23<sup>rd</sup> March were approved and signed by the Chair as an accurate record.

1637 – J Tiscornia raised a concern over the reference to good financial health suggesting it should read improving financial health. However, the minute referred to the SFA categorisation of the College's financial health and it was agreed the minute was accurate.

1646 **Matters Arising from the Minutes & Action Plan**

There were no matters arising from the minutes and the updates from the action plan were approved.

1647 **Principal's Report and Data Dashboard**

The Principal presented his report that covered international links with the College, national information impacting on the College including the apprenticeship levy and the funding

allocations from the Education Funding Agency and Skills Funding Agency. The report highlighted the importance of Study Programmes and how monitoring should be a key focus for the board.

F Cooke asked about how the Board would be able to monitor Study Programmes and was advised that an internal audit had already taken place. It was agreed that more data could be included in the data dashboard such as the percentage of students undertaking work placement and increased reporting of maths and English data.

In respect of apprenticeships, it was reported that a successful model for higher apprenticeships in hospitality was being developed nationally as part of the growth plan. The College had yet to receive a response to its request for additional apprenticeship growth funding. J Edginton reported that he had raised the opportunity for engineering apprenticeships with senior managers at Sellafield as part of their restructure and felt it was important to raise the profile of the College's provision with Sellafield.

The data dashboard for May showed College performance against key indicators. Attention was drawn to under-performance against apprenticeship success rates that were currently 4% below target but still ahead of the year end outcome for 2014/15. E Harris questioned the debt figure in D8 and was advised that the target would be investigated and reported in the next management accounts.

The Board RESOLVED to:

- Receive the Principal's report
- Note areas of concern within the data dashboard and what was being done to address under-performance
- Include data on Study Programmes in the data dashboard

#### 1648 **Area Review and Strategic Planning Event follow up – (Confidential item)**

The Principal provided Board members with an update on the first steering group meeting and the visit by two members of the Commissioner's team on 25<sup>th</sup> April. A copy of the site visit programme, the presentation provided and comments made in the feedback session were included for information. A paper summarising stakeholder comments from the Strategic Planning event on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2016 was presented as well as notes taken from the first meeting of the College's Area Review Task & Finish Group.

The Board discussed at some length the range of options available.

The Board RESOLVED to:

- Agree its first and second options
- Continue discussions about merger
- Develop a robust business case to support the growth plan
- Explore further ways of collaborating with key partners

#### 1649 **Teaching, Learning & Assessment report**

The Director of Curriculum & Quality presented the Teaching, Learning & Assessment report focussing on applications for the academic year 2016/17 and the quality of teaching observations.

Concern had been raised over the decline in applications in some key curriculum areas including hair & beauty, business, sport and music compared with other areas where there was a growth in applications. Notably there had been a significant increase in the number of applications for A level packages, rising from 7 in 2015/16 to 24 for next year. A comprehensive keep warm and promotions strategy had been drawn up to ensure regular engagement with applicants. This would include a new event targeted at parents to raise awareness of A level provision, whilst recognising the risk of aggressively targeting the schools market. Of particular importance would be an increase in the conversion of applicants to enrolled students, which was at 85% last year. G Watson raised a concern

over displacement for A level and whether the same applied to other curriculum provision and M Cawthorn responded that more students would be likely to take A levels as BTEC qualifications got harder but stressed the need to develop more of a 6<sup>th</sup> form culture in the College with a minimum 4 day timetable.

An update on teaching observations was provided showing the current position in respect of 7 members of staff whose teaching had been below expectations with all now achieving at grade 1 or 2 with the exception of one member of staff who had now left the College. This meant that all teaching staff were now performing at equivalent of grade 1 or 2 (meets college requirements). F Cooke asked how teaching staff were supported in achieving a higher grade and was provided with information on target setting, action planning and professional support where performance requires improvement and that had removed the previous focus on grades. The Principal raised the issue of insufficient rigour and challenge at Lakes College that had contributed to their grading of 3 at their recent Ofsted inspection. Z Mohammed confirmed that the process worked well and supported the desire to improve.

The Board RESOLVED to:

- Accept the Teaching, Learning & Assessment report noting work being done to support the potential shortfall in numbers of new students being recruited
- Congratulate curriculum team for the quality of teaching and learning identified in the observation report.

#### 1650 **Capital Projects Update**

Further update papers had been circulated to members just prior to the meeting to ensure that the Board had the most current information on costings for the Wildman Street studios. The Director of Finance & Resources provided an update on progress at Wildman Street, the Castle Dairy and the Box.

The report provided by RLB included actual costs against target costs which were considered by the Board. J Edginton asked whether market forces or lack of price scrutiny had resulted in price increases and was provided with responses based on the difficulties and specialisms within the project that had been covered at previous board meetings. L Shrapnel advised that the revolving overdraft facility would be used to cover the cost rather than securing new loans. She reported that the Project Manager had offered to attend a future board meeting to provide further assurance for governors and it was agreed that update information would be sent out following the next monthly site meeting scheduled for 26<sup>th</sup> May 2016. Delays in completion, including the issue of contaminated spoil from the County Hotel spillage several years previously, had meant that it was now expected that the building would be handed over in late July. The importance of completion in the summer was reinforced to ensure new students had access to the facilities with a suggestion that the opening be linked to the Lakes Alive Festival at the end of August.

In respect of Castle Dairy, it was reported that a new head chef had been appointed from Linthwaite House Hotel in Windermere. Acceleration of the flood repair work was being requested from South Lakeland District Council and tenders for the kitchen were being sent out.

The Board RESOLVED to:

- Note progress on the Wildman Street Art Studios and Castle Dairy
- Receive further updates following the next site meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2016
- Ensure Wildman Street Art Studios would be open to students for the start of the next academic year

#### 1651 **Management Accounts**

Management accounts for the month ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016 were presented for consideration, along with commentary. The board considered the key figures showing a forecast historic cost surplus of £14k against a budgeted surplus of £48k. Reasons for the variation included lower than planned income for 24+ loans and ESF contracts, the latter

due to delay in tenders being released for this year. The paper reported that pay as a percentage of income was currently at 70% but it was anticipated to reduce during the rest of the year to a forecast position of 66%. The covenant position was reported to be at 31.84%, well within the breach level of 40%.

F Cooke asked about tuition fees which were reported to be 45% below target and was responded to with reference to plans to address the shortfall plus issues with coding between tuition fees and commercial income. E Harris suggested that it would be worth investigating the factoring of debt and it was agreed this could be looked at although profiles of funding made it less likely to be possible.

The Board RESOLVED to:

- Receive the management accounts with no major issues identified
- Continue to monitor pay as a percentage of income and the covenant position

#### 1652 **College Trip Match Funding**

The Board was asked to provide some match funding for a student visit to Kenya in June. A figure of £1,500 has been request to support the four students and two staff who would be going.

J Edginton and Z Mohammed had both declared interest in this agenda item and were advised that they could not contribute to the discussion and voting. However, both put forward reasons for the request to be approved but were not allowed to vote and their contribution was discounted.

Board members discussed the request and had concerns over setting a precedent for other course trips. It was reported that 9 students had originally applied to attend but that 5 had dropped out because of the cost. Members voted 7:1 against agreeing to the grant. At this point, J Edginton stated that he would put in the money which was not accepted as being inappropriate to his role as a governor.

A second proposal was made to offer the group a loan which would be paid back through further fund raising but to be determined by the Senior Management team. A vote was taken and this proposal was agreed unanimously and would be left to the Senior Management Team to consider.

The Board RESOLVED to:

- Refuse the request for £1,500 to be paid to support the trip
- Request that Senior Management Team consider a loan to the group to be paid back through fund raising
- Disregard the offer made by J Edginton to pay the money to the group

#### 1653 **Any other business**

1. The Chair informed the Board of an offer to visit both the Mardix and Gilkes factories in June – more information would be provided once a date had been set up
2. Arts and Media Campus Tour taking place 12<sup>th</sup> May
3. End of year show for performing arts – “Made in Dagenham” to be held at the Brewery Arts Centre 15<sup>th</sup> 18<sup>th</sup> June 2016

#### 1654 **Date of Next Meeting**

Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2016