

**Meeting of the Kendal College Corporation
Wednesday 5th July 2017 at 5.00 pm
Conference Room 1
MINUTES**

Present:

Michelle Clement (Staff Governor)
Fra Cooke
Cath Dutton (Chair)
Pat McIver
Eve Martin
Zaeed Mohammed (Staff Governor)
Rebecca Sandham
Michael Southworth
Graham Wilkinson (Principal)
(attendance 64 %)

In attendance:

Maggie Cawthorn, Carole Drury (Clerk), Craig Owen, Louise Shrapnel
Matt Burke, Richard Evans, Kelli Horner, Suzanne Horner & Robert Marshall-Slater item 1751 only

1747 **Apologies for Absence**

Emily Harris, Amanda O'Brien, Isaac Roach, Jon Thedham, Gordon Watson

1748 **Declaration of Interests**

There were no declarations of interest

1749 **To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 17th May 2017**

The minutes of the meeting of 17th May were approved and signed by the Chair as an accurate record

1750 **Matters Arising from the Minutes & Action Plan**

There were no matters arising not covered by the action plan or on the agenda.

1751 **Teaching, Learning & Assessment report including Ofsted feedback – key agenda item**

(Heads of Schools & Work-Based Learning & Corporate Client Managers attended for this item only)

The Principal gave some context about the inspection, emphasising the difficulties faced with the inspection being so late in the academic year, during GCSE exams week, and with notification received during half term week when some key members of staff were on holiday. The draft Ofsted report was tabled for governor information with full publication expected in the next few days (published Tuesday 11th July 2017).

The Senior Leadership team were thanked for the successful outcome of the inspection, recognising the differences between the frameworks used on this and previous inspections. The Principal outlined the grades allocated and comparison with other North West Colleges and provided other key data showing the direction of travel for the

College and reasons why an inspection was triggered ie declining apprenticeship success rates and GCSE results in English and maths.

The Director of Curriculum & Quality, along with the Curriculum Heads of Schools and Work-based & Corporate Client managers, gave a presentation on the College's response to the Ofsted feedback, demonstrating how the actions had already been transferred into an action plan with attributable targets and measures.

A culture of high expectation for learners and staff was noted throughout the report along with positive partnerships and quality processes. A key area for development was the disconnect between quality and declining provision in the self-assessment report.

The Board discussed the Ofsted findings and proposed actions, with comments summarised as follows:

- Underestimation of the requirements of the current framework
- Importance of choosing the right validating partner for self-assessment
- Use of independent data analysis to support the grade for outcomes for learners
- Impact of election delay in release of key data and regional variations of grading
- Communication strategy of positive outcome
- Strength of outstanding grade for Personal Development, Behaviour & Welfare
- Future consideration of data eg by age group, equality measures
- Value-added measures
- Improvements to maths and English and sharing of best practice
- Strength of employer partnerships for apprenticeships
- Some weak practice but also pockets of excellent practice in apprenticeship delivery
- Additional training for staff, new tracking systems for students, mini-inspections for curriculum departments to be introduced with regular reports to Board

It was suggested that aspirations to re-gain a grade 1 should be delayed based on capacity and resources, recognising that it would be necessary to prioritise improvements. The impact on employers of the apprenticeship grade was discussed, noting that success rates and the learner/employer experience were more tangible than the snapshot inspection opinion. A longer term approach would be needed to move forward. The Principal reported that the ESFA Intervention Team had said they were pleased for the College.

The Chair concluded the discussion by congratulating the College on its achievement and that she was looking forward to seeing the action plan in practice. She felt it would be important going forward for the Board to receive position papers on Self-Assessment at key times of the year.

The Board RESOLVED to:

- Note the Ofsted report findings and actions for improvement
- Request that an email be sent out from the Board to all staff
- Receive updated Self-Assessment position statements at key times

1752 **Principal's Report and Data Dashboard**

The Principal's report provided a summary of key national issues impacting on the sector, along with those identified by the Association of Colleges, some of which would feature in the College's new strategic plan. The Chair asked about the cost impact of the introduction of T-Levels in 2020, noting that qualification delivery hours would be significantly increased and include substantial work placement

The Principal reported that a fire safety survey from the ESFA had been actioned with a nil return based on the fact that none of the College buildings were over 3 stories high. A request has been submitted to the architects for confirmation that there had been no use of non-fire-resistant materials used in recent building projects. A further update would be provided to the Board once this has been established. The issue of fire risk assessment for apprentices was raised and it was confirmed that it is included in the overall health and safety assessment carried out with each employer.

In respect of capital bidding, the Principal advised that he had met with the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) about proposed bids for Biopharma and a high technology kitchen.

A progress update on the position of Kendal Museum University Type 2 status was included in the report, as well as a clarification of the different accreditation types. It was reported that the lead for South Lakeland District Council (SLDC) had stepped down from the cabinet and that the Museum would not be discussed until the October meeting.

The report also highlighted a recent hospitality success by level 3 catering students at the 2017 Young Seafood Chef of the Year competition in Grimsby. The success was reported in the Westmorland Gazette. An update on the progress of the Castle Dairy Restaurant & Apprenticeship Academy was provided along with two recent magazine reviews.

The data dashboard was considered using the notes to give responses where data was showing a risk of non-achievement of targets. It was requested that more narrative be provided to show how to move amber lines into green and to incorporate movement directional arrows.

The Board RESOLVED to:

- Note the Principal's response re fire safety and request an update
- Resume debate and decisions re Kendal Museum following SLDC cabinet meeting in October 2017
- Request additional narrative on the data dashboard

1753 **Strategic Planning update**

The first draft of the new strategic plan 2017-2020 was presented for consideration, with no significant changes to the key priorities and updated objectives included. Linkages to the Quality Improvement Plan emerging from the Ofsted report had been incorporated where appropriate.

Proposed changes to the Mission Statement were considered, having been drawn up in conjunction with A level business students. Board members were asked to review this proposal, ie "Creating Brighter Futures through High Aspirations for All", and to advise the Clerk of further suggestions.

The Board RESOLVED to:

- Note the proposed updates to the strategic plan
- Consider further options for the new mission statement

1754 **Reports/Actions from the Working Groups:**

- Finance Working Group 25th April 2017 including Management accounts and Growth Plan

The Principal reported on the work of the Finance Working Group meeting where the May management accounts had been considered. The management accounts were

provided for Board members to review. The Principal had reported on recent meetings with the ESFA intervention team where the issue of reducing the pay-to-turnover ratio had been raised. As a consequence, a small number of redundancies were currently under consultation.

The growth plan had also been considered and was included for information, showing that the target for 2016/17 had been overshoot by £234k, with good progress to date against the 2017/18 target.

Governors challenged the current financial position asking for an updated end of year forecast bearing in mind the year end was only three weeks away and where the evidence to support the achievement of the target would come from. The Director of Finance & Resources, Louise Shrapnel, assured the Board that every line of data and income/expenditure was closely monitored to ensure the College did not drop into formal intervention. More information would need to be provided to give assurance that the financial outturn target would be met. Louise confirmed that she was very prudent with forecasting and confident in the outturn position. Governors stressed that honesty in respect of the financial position would be essential and that everything was being done to avoid a serious financial situation for the College and that the key risks were well understood by the Senior Leadership team. Newer members were offered the chance to meet with Louise to better understand the College's financial management processes.

- Succession Planning Task & Finish Group 3rd July 2017
The Chair provided the Board with an update following the recent meeting of this group. Mike Southworth had joined the group and would provide invaluable assistance to the group. The next meeting of the group is scheduled for early September.

The Board RESOLVED to:

- Note the financial position but challenging the achievement of the final outturn position
- Receive an invitation to meet with the Director of Finance & Resources to better understand College finances
- Gain assurance that the working groups were meeting their terms of reference

1755 **Budget approval 2017/18**

The Principal presented the draft budget for 2017/18. Commentary to the budget was provided, showing the link to key strategic objectives under priority 4, key assumptions such as funding allocations, financial health assessment and primary financial statements.

The three-year financial forecast was also provided, including assumptions and a prediction of a good financial health grade by 2019 (score rising to 190 from the current position of 130) and an improvement in the surplus position to £252k reflecting increases in ESFA and HEFCE funding.

The Director of Finance & Resources explained that the budget setting process was based around assumptions of income and expenditure identified through the main curriculum plan and would be subject to modification where teaching hours were taken out of the plan. With a projected operating surplus of £178k, the budget proposal would give the College an overall score of 160 for financial health. Budgeting for uncertain income lines such as European Social Fund provision (The Edge) was prudent but with potential opportunity for increase.

Zaeed Mohammed asked about return on investment for money spent on capital projects and the impact of proposed redundancies in support areas. The Principal responded that it was essential that the pay-to-turnover ratio was addressed to bring it more into line with sector expectations. Commercial lettings for College premises remained low but more opportunities would be available to maximise income such as from The Box and the Wildman Street galleries. In respect of redundancies, the Principal gave a reassurance that numbers would be low and that cost savings would have to be made elsewhere. Zaeed Mohammed asked that better staffing structures be considered to meet priorities such as apprenticeship provision.

Fra Cooke asked about the impact of unsatisfactory financial health and was advised that there will always be levels of fluctuation based on changes to income. He suggested that more stress testing be carried out on recognised uncertainties of funding to establish the impact on risk and what actions could be put in place to rectify any situation presented. Pat Mclver asked more about the variables and tipping point into concern suggesting that key issues be identified and what the College would do to manage the risk. Louise Shrapnel advised that achievement of the growth plan was a significant factor in ensuring the financial health grade was maintained.

The Board RESOLVED to:

- Approve the draft budget for 2017/18
- Approve the 3-year financial forecast
- Request risk assessment of budgetary concerns

1756 **Policy Updates**

The following two policies were presented for approval, with changes highlighted.

- Financial Regulations
- Health & Safety

Pat Mclver asked how the College ensures that policies are in place and used by staff and whether the content reflects responsibilities and expectations, as well as how they are audited against actual practice. The Principal advised that policies are regularly reviewed and updated in line with statutory changes and staff have ready access to them, with key policies being introduced through staff training and new staff induction.

The Board RESOLVED to:

- Approve the Financial Regulations 2017
- Approve the Health and Safety Policy 2017

1757 **Annual reports:**

The following two reports were presented by the Director of External Relations & Client Services for consideration, to give assurance that procedures for safeguarding met statutory requirements and that complaints were handled effectively:

- **Safeguarding:** the safeguarding report provided an overview of referrals dealt with over the year and the types of services offered to students in crisis. A section on meeting statutory responsibilities provides assurance that the Board is complying with expectations. The Board was asked to approve the report and note the entries on the safeguarding log. The Prevent Risk Register and Action plan was also considered, noting progress against actions previously identified.
- **Complaints:** the annual complaints and compliments was considered, including graphs identifying complaints and complainants by type. Most complaints had been satisfactorily dealt with. A statement from the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education was included showing a nil return.

Eve Martin commented on the concise safeguarding report and also asked how easy it was for complaints to be made to the College. She was advised that many complaints are dealt with at source in an informal way with the report showing formal complaints that are covered by the College's policy.

The Board RESOLVED to:

- Accept the Safeguarding report
- Accept the Complaints report

1758 **Governor Performance Review 2017**

Board members were advised of the process of performance review including probationary review for new governors. Forms would be sent out to members including any key data to support individual discussions with the Chair, all of which would support the annual self- assessment process and governor development and improvement plan for 2017/18.

1759 **Appointment of Chair & Vice Chair for 2017/18**

No nomination forms had been received by the Clerk prior to the meeting but Jon Thedham was nominated by the Chair for the position of Vice Chair to the Corporation. Cath Dutton was unanimously voted in as Chair for a further year and Jon as Vice Chair.

1760 **Date of Next Meeting**

Wednesday 4th October 2017

To mark his retirement from the Board after 8 years of membership, the Chair thanked Fra Cooke for his outstanding contribution to the Board and said that his contribution would be greatly missed. Fra wished the College well going forward.

Alastair Speed had also completed his course at College and would no longer be attending. The Board wished him well on his higher level apprenticeship at BAE and thanked him for his excellent contribution as Student Governor.