

**Meeting of the Kendal College Corporation
Wednesday 29th March 2017 at 5.00 pm
Conference Room 1
MINUTES**

Present:

Michelle Clement (Staff Governor)
Fra Cooke
Cath Dutton (Chair)
Emily Harris (to 7 pm)
Isaac Roach (Student Governor)
Zaeed Mohammed (Staff Governor)
Alastair Speed (Student Governor)
Jon Thedham (to 6 pm)
Graham Wilkinson (Principal)
(attendance 75% reducing to 50%)

In attendance:

Maggie Cawthorn, Carole Drury (Clerk), Craig Owen
Suzanne Horner – Link Governor presentation, Kay Naylor 1727 only

The Chair welcomed Michael Southworth, Amanda O'Brien and Eve Martin to the meeting as observers

Link Governor Presentation – Employer Engagement
Emily Harris and Suzanne Horner, (Work-based & Corporate Client Manager)

Emily introduced Suzanne to the Board, describing her role in working with employers. She is one of two Work-based & Corporate Client Managers, each linked to a curriculum school. The key objectives for the role including the growth of apprenticeships and apprenticeship revenue through working with different employers – those the college has previously worked with, existing employers to generate more business and new employers. Emphasising the quality of College delivery was the main selling point and the ability to offer a range of delivery models such as group delivery along with the recognition that apprenticeships can be used as staff development for existing workforces.

A key part of the role is managing the implications of apprenticeship reform, including the levy, through supporting employers understand the changes to funding and standards going forward, along with new end-point assessment. Suzanne confirmed that two new standards would be introduced this year – Electro-technical and Health & Social Care.

Suzanne gave examples of how the College was already working with large employers including Cumbria County Council and South Lakeland District Council and emphasised the length of time it took to develop a relationship with an employer leading to training.

Recruitment was via work-based assessors who visit employers, employer events, word-of-mouth and enquiries into College. Suzanne asked Governors to support the promotion of apprenticeships via their own business and social networks.

Governors asked questions including how the College meets wider employer engagement needs and was advised that the College engaged with businesses in a

number of different ways including through the provision of business training. When asked about the number of apprenticeship providers offering deals on training, Suzanne responded that, once employers were shown the quality of the Kendal College provision, they were happy to sign up for quality over reduced cost.

Suzanne and Emily were thanked for their presentation.

1719 **Apologies for Absence**

Pat McIver, Rebecca Sandham, Gordon Watson

1720 **Declaration of Interests**

There were no declarations of interest

1721 **To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 15th February 2017**

The minutes of the meeting held on 15th February were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair. A version of the minutes, excluding confidential items, would be posted on the College website

1722 **Matters Arising from the Minutes & Action Plan**

There were no matters arising not included on the action plan although one action in respect of advising governors monthly on SFA intervention status was amended.

1723 **Principal's Report and Data Dashboard**

The Principal provided an update on a range of current issues that included:

- a) an update following a meeting with David Sykes of SLDC on proposals being put to the council in respect of the future of the museum collections and buildings. Further information would be shared with the Board once the council had considered the report
- b) the bond issue with Arcardia had now been resolved with a reasonable settlement
- c) the College had put forward its intention to apply to become an Institute of Technology based on the bio-pharmaceutical curriculum and links with GSK. Other Cumbria colleges had also submitted expressions of interest along with a STEM bid led by the University of Cumbria.
- d) Castle Dairy refurbishment was now 3 weeks behind but remained protected by business continuity insurance. The expected opening was now end of April.

The data dashboard was considered. Attention was drawn to the attendance rates for maths and English GCSE which had improved slightly from the previous month but which were still below target. The Board was reassured that all attendance was closely monitored and followed up using the student disciplinary procedure.

Financial KPIs at risk were reviewed along with concerns over the Adult Learner Responsive fund shortfall that was being addressed through a range of strategies including additional courses, distance learning provision and staff development.

1724 **Reports/Actions from the Committees:**

- Search & Governance – a committee panel had met with 3 potential governors following their application to join the Board. All 3 were welcomed to the meeting today as part of the appointment process. A decision to accept or reject the applications would be made at the end of the meeting, based on skills needs of the board.
- Audit & Risk Committee 14th March 2017
Z Mohammed presented the notes from the meeting, with specific reference to the two recent internal audits into Payroll and HR Systems and IT Security & Disaster Recovery for which medium and low recommendations had been made and accepted by management.

The strategic risk register had been considered with the risk over safeguarding increased due to recent Ofsted reports into school security.

Following a request from the Board to review information provided to governors, the Committee had agreed that any issues noted in the media relating to College staff or students would be reported to the Chair or Vice Chair via the Clerk and then shared with governors if it was agreed to be in the best interests of the College.

1725 **Premises Security & Safeguarding**

Following reports of recent school Ofsted inspection outcomes that had been negatively affected by concerns over premises security, a review of college security had been made and an update made to the following policies. The College had taken advice from anti-terrorist experts from Cumbria Police and had put in place a range of measures to improve security through improved signage, culture and vigilance, explained in the two key policies:

- Premises & Protective Security Policy, including risk assessment and action plan
- Safeguarding Policy, linked to the Security Policy

The proposals within the policy were outlined, explaining the changes in culture with a separation of private and public spaces along with improved signage. A risk assessment and action plan outlined the main areas of concern and how they would be addressed. It was agreed that photographic identification worn on lanyards for all students and staff would be in place for September and introduced beforehand for new apprentices and staff once equipment had been purchased which would be reflected in the action plan (Action: C Drury).

Z Mohammed questioned if the measures were enough to meet safeguarding expectations, notably those inspected by Ofsted and it was agreed that the position would be monitored through monitoring inspection reports in the sector.

In respect of the safeguarding annual policy update, changes to reflect premises security and other key elements from Keeping Children Safe in Education were highlighted. Minor changes in numbering and wording were agreed, especially in respect of the College's responsibilities for under 16 provision.

The Board RESOLVED to:

- Approve the Premises & Protective Security Policy
- Approve the amendments to the Safeguarding Policy
- Take assurance that the College was risk assessing premises access and putting in place actions to reduce risk

1726 **Teaching, Learning & Assessment report**

The Director of Curriculum & Quality presented her report for this meeting that included reference to the increase in applications for 16-18 provision, particularly for apprenticeships but noting areas where recruitment was down including hospitality, hair and construction. It was reported that higher education recruitment was disappointing but recognising that local applications tended to come in later than those for universities.

Cath Dutton questioned the link between hospitality recruitment and the College's intention to develop a food technology capital bid through the LEP, questioning whether investment was being put into the right industry.

A new significant measure of student progress, value added, was explained with evidence of reported scores to date based on a small proportion of students. It was explained that it was hard to evidence good value added scores where students come in with high GCSE grades. Overall the college scores were reported as not being good

enough and a range of actions were being put in place to improve this measure including briefings to all curriculum staff, which would be included in the self-assessment report next year.

Fra Cooke felt that this measure should be further explored at the strategic planning event to consider the impact of the value added scores and how they compared with other local providers which in turn could impact of external perceptions of the College.

The Board RESOLVED to:

- Accept the Teaching, Learning & Assessment Report
- Note the current position in respect of student applications and areas of concern
- Request that the impact of value added be considered at the strategy event

1727 **Management accounts and Growth Plan**

The Finance Manager presented the management accounts to the end of February 2017 along with commentary to support the forecast historic loss of £27k for year-end. Adjustments to the budget had been made to reflect different income streams and newly emerging opportunities. The position in respect of pay and non-pay items was included. Appendices included balance sheet, statement of comprehensive income, performance against key indicators and cashflow reports.

The updated growth plan was considered showing performance against the growth targets with performance in year being £90k above target. Early indicators for growth against 2017/18 targets show an increased allocation under lagged funding. Concerns were raised over low recruitment to new higher education provision noted in the plan. The Board was reminded that the Finance Working Group that included Emily Harris and co-opted accountant, Ian Clark, reviewed the management accounts at each meeting as well as the growth plan, that was a condition of independence following the area based review.

Emily Harris raised some questions over the accounts in respect of the profit and loss position raising concerns that the figure was falling further behind the outturn target with some months still to go. She questioned whether there was still a growth position predicted. Kay Naylor provided some assurances that the income and expenditure was reviewed monthly with changes in expectations being made such as for external contracts where delivery had not come in on time due to circumstances outside the College's control. Additional costs to cover redundancy, long term sickness and maternity leave could not always be forecast accurately. The Principal confirmed that he felt the year end position could be achieved as the College had ensured a positive outturn position for the last 15 years.

Fra Cooke suggested that the Finance Working Group should identify a threshold point at which the Board should be concerned so that contingency plans could be put in place to ensure a positive financial outcome and to examine why growth was not impacting on an improved financial position. Jon Thedham agreed with this, linking it also to it being a trigger for likely future mergers if the growth plan income did not materialise. Kay Naylor confirmed the overdraft and headroom facility and was advised that it was essential this figure was not reached.

The Board considered the pay award for staff, based on the current financial position. Zaeed Mohammed questioned whether it should be deferred or abandoned all together but the Principal recommended that the decision be deferred to the end of the year.

The Board RESOLVED to:

- Note the current financial position, and continued scrutiny by members of the Finance Working Group including setting of a threshold point
- Defer the decision on the staff pay award

1728 **Capital Projects Update**

The Principal provided an update on the Castle Dairy re-instatement work and the financial position in respect of the insurance claim, noting the additional £10k needed for completion of the ladies toilets to be funded from the 2017/18 capital budget.

1729 **Cumbria Colleges Ltd**

The Board was asked to approve the transfer of ownership from Carlisle College to Newcastle College in respect of dormant company, Cumbria Colleges Ltd, following the takeover of Carlisle by Newcastle College Group.

It was RESOLVED to:

- Agree the transfer and advise the Clerk of Carlisle College of the decision

1730 **Strategic Planning Event - Wednesday 26th April** (this item was taken earlier in the meeting)

The Chair led discussions on the format of the next strategic planning event following a request for feedback from governors. In his absence, Pat McIver had suggested that it would be helpful to understand the starting point for the event and to use a SWOT analysis to get to priorities. Jon Thedham had provided a range of tools to use at the event to ensure the opportunity was maximised to set the future direction of the College.

Board members discussed the merits of including external stakeholders to support strategic development but Jon Thedham had suggested that the strong skills of Board members should be used to support strategic analysis, choices and implementation. Fra Cooke had suggested that strategic thinking needed to focus on growth for the next 12 months and not get involved in external distractions. The Principal reminded Board members of the impact of external speakers but it was felt that the scheduled date should focus on growth and strategic direction, putting on a separate event for employers and stakeholders.

The Chair confirmed there would be a new approach with discussion linked to proven tools such as SWOT. Background reading would also be provided ahead of the event. The Chair, Principal and Clerk would meet to confirm the programme and arrangements.

The Board RESOLVED to:

- Agree the style and approach for the Strategic Planning Event on Wednesday 26th April 2017

1731 **Any other Business**

The Board agreed to the appointment of the 3 governor applications:

- Michael Southworth
- Amanda O'Brien
- Eve Martin

1732 **Date of Next Meeting –**

Wednesday 17th May 2017

(Strategic Planning Event, Wednesday 26th April 2017)