

**Meeting of the Kendal College Corporation
Wednesday 23rd May 2018 at 5.00 pm
Demonstration Kitchen
MINUTES**

Present:

Michelle Clement (Staff Governor)
Cath Dutton (Chair)
Emily Harris
Pat McIver
Eve Martin
Zaeed Mohammed (Staff Governor)
Amanda O'Brien
Rebecca Sandham
Mike Southworth
Jon Thedham
Gordon Watson
Graham Wilkinson (Principal)
(Attendance 86%)

In attendance:

Maggie Cawthorn (Director of Curriculum & Quality)
Carole Drury (Director of Governance)
Kelvin Nash
Craig Owen (Director of College Information Services)
John Rawsthorne
Louise Shrapnel (Director of Finance & Resources)

The Chair welcomed CEO & Principal Designate, Kelvin Nash to the meeting along with John Rawsthorne.

Governor Link Programme – Michelle Clement & Adele Mundy – Student Services Manager

Michelle Clement introduced the department and the Student Services Manager who gave an overview of the department and its responsibilities with a particular focus on pre-entry guidance for full and part time applicants including schools liaison. Adele passed around a range of materials developed by the College to support guidance and also to support student finance and welfare, with more targeted and individualised services being put in place.

In respect of the important area of work experience, it was explained that 35 hours of placement time was sourced through the department for full time students but that the introduction of T-quals would require students to undertake the equivalent of 3 months of placement time. Difficulties in sourcing science placements was raised along with issues of placements not matching student needs or location.

Adele and Michelle were thanked for their presentation and for the obvious enthusiasm for the work of the team.

1813 Apologies for Absence

Isaac Roach (Student Governor). Naomi Chessell was also absent

1814 **Declaration of Interests**

There were no declarations of interest not already noted in the register.

1815 **To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 28th March 2018**

The minutes of the meeting held on 28th March were accepted and signed as an accurate record by the Chair.

1816 **Matters Arising from the Minutes & Action Plan**

There were no matters arising not covered by the action plan where updates were reviewed.

1797 – governors were reminded that the Director of Finance & Resources would be happy to spend time with them on a one-to-one basis on college finances and funding

1803 – Student Governor Naomi Chessell put forward some ideas for improving resources for students in respect of mental health which would be forwarded to Maggie Cawthorn.

1817 **Principal's Report and Data Dashboard**

The Principal's final report included a range of information of interest to the College including links to the new Ofsted inspection handbook and reference to the current Ofsted inspection of NCG group that included Carlisle College. He commented that a 5-year inspection window would make it difficult to show improvement where a lower grade had been awarded such as with the College's apprenticeship provision.

He reported on the successful bid by the Cumbria Colleges as part of the Flexible Learning Fund where the Cumbria bid was one of 32 providers able to access the £11.7 million fund. The Cumbria bid focussed on the development of an on-line eLearning platform to pilot blended functional skills delivery in each of the colleges. The project would be used to develop course content and secure and customise a shared platform.

National reporting of a reduction in apprenticeship recruitment was raised noting criticisms of the apprenticeship levy by key employer groups with a feeling that a change in government policy would be needed. Pat McIver commented that the levy was not seen to be delivering what was expected.

ICCA Assessment of the College's Costed Curriculum Strategy: following the Board's request for this assessment to take place, the Principal reported that the formal written response had not yet been received but that the verbal feedback following the assessment had not shown any substantive concerns with a recommendation that governors approve the curriculum plan. It was agreed that no further action could be taken until the formal report had been received.

College Training Kitchen and Capital Bid

The report provided comprehensive plans and costings for two bids being submitted to Cumbria LEP to enable the essential refurbishment of the training kitchen that housed 30 year old equipment that was now beyond repair. Due to the importance of this facility in meeting employer training needs within the visitor economy sector, the Principal had outlined how the refurbishment could be met if the LEP bids were not successful. Additional financial support was also being sought through the Savoy Educational Trust.

Emily Harris asked how the capital proposals fitted into a five year capital and ten year accommodation strategy and was advised by the Principal that capital requirements including roof, boiler and lift repairs had been previously reported to the Board Zaeed Mohammed asked about the risk of not completing the work on the kitchen if funding was not allocated and was advised that facility would have to close following gas testing. Cath Dutton asked if the kitchen costs had been budgeted for and was advised that £50k had been proposed. It was requested that a new capital strategy going forward be prepared and presented at the next meeting so that the Board could see capital

priorities and how the spend for both planned and unexpected items would be spread over a five year plan.

The date for the outcome of the bid was not yet clear but the Savoy Trust bid outcome was due in mid-June. The Principal expected the kitchen bid to be high priority for the LEP as it had been included in the LEP Skills Delivery Plan. The Chair agreed to talk to the LEP employer representative for Visitor Economy to stress the urgency of refurbishing this important facility.

Data Dashboard

Updated data against target for key performance indicators was presented, with commentary to explain where targets had not been met and actions being taken to address the under-performance.

The Chair asked what was being done to address attendance rates as they were down and was advised of new measures using text messaging to follow up non-attendance being introduced for next year.

Zaeed Mohammed raised his concerns on C4, liquidity and solvency current ratio, being below target and the over lack of stability in cashflow. However, it was reported that there was an improvement over the position last year. The Chair advised that the Board would continue to consider financial expenditure decisions very carefully being mindful that decisions needed to be made to address an improvement in the financial position of the college

The Board RESOLVED to:

1. Note the Principal's report
2. Receive the information on the bid for refurbishment of the training kitchen
3. Request a 5 year capital strategy to include both planned and unexpected items for the next Board meeting
4. Note performance against key indicators and importance of improving cashflow performance

1818 **FE Commissioner Visit Report**

The Principal presented the report following the Commissioner's team visit on 19th and 20th March 2018 and that had given a strong endorsement of the approach being taken by the College. Four recommendations had been made:

1. Provide a written update on progress towards the achievement of planned surplus for 2017/18 and likelihood of achievement of targets for 2018/19
2. Review the impact of A level provision
3. Continued monitoring of financial position by ESFA
4. Consideration of undertaking a Structure & Prospects appraisal to test alternative structural options

The Board agreed that the assessment had provided a thorough investigation of the College's financial health and was pleased that its strategy had been endorsed. Kelvin Nash reported that not all assessments provided full endorsement with another category of partially endorsed.

In respect of recommendation 4 that the Board should consider undertaking a Structure and Prospects Appraisal, it was noted that the Board had already considered its options widely at its strategy event, with regular reviews of its collaborative activities with other colleges. Mike Southworth felt that the recommendation was misleading and was contrary to the endorsement of the Board's approach to date. He felt it was important to clarify the wording to see if it was considered essential. The Principal reminded the Board that the restructuring fund had already been accessed via the research into setting up the Cumbria

Skills Alliance. The Board requested that Kelvin Nash seek clarification on the expectations of the recommendation and report back to the next meeting.

The Board RESOLVED to:

1. Receive the FE Commissioner's Team reported with endorsement of its approach
2. Seek further clarification of the recommendation to carry out a SPA

1819 **Teaching, Learning & Assessment report**

Recruitment

The Director of Curriculum & Quality presented her report that included data on applications for 2018/19 academic year that were showing an increase of 15% over the same time last year, particularly in Health & Social Care and Business. Areas of concern and growth were noted. She added that there would be no additional resource costs.

Higher Education recruitment remained disappointing with strong competition from local universities. In addition, the HE Consumer Act made it difficult to withdraw courses once they had been advertised.

Jon Thedham questioned low recruitment to hospitality courses and whether it represented a return on investment, with reference to the training kitchen bid above. However, it was reported that numbers were still increasing and did not include progression students that would likely result in a total of 66 students for this area plus 143 apprentices.

The Chair congratulated the College teams for continued growth in applications and noted that a shortage of curriculum space was becoming an increasing issue.

Higher Education Retention

Following a request from the last board meeting, higher education student retention was reported showing an overall retention figure of 93% with most students leaving within the first 6 weeks of their programme. Where students had left their course, it was reported that in most cases it was linked to ill health with several suspending study. There was, however, a financial implication for every student who left their course.

The requirement of the Office for Students registration was raised and included student reassurance that courses would be delivered through to the end, meaning that a full commitment to a two year programme had to be made.

Apprenticeships

In respect of apprenticeship data (as noted in the dashboard), a 1.2% decline in best case overall achievement rate had been reported. The issue related mostly to advanced apprenticeships in Health & Social Care that was a national concern. Maggie also outlined the difficulties of delivering frameworks to staff working in EBD schools where level 2 IT was part of the framework. Schools had high staff turnover who were sometimes not capable of this level of skill. She gave assurance that the figures for success rates was not declining but that the target was proving hard to achieve with the focus remaining on quality. The Chair expressed concern over lower performance and the impact on the Ofsted apprenticeship grade.

It was also reported that the College has maintained its matrix accreditation that it had held since 1999 and which reflected on levels of service provided in respect of impartial advice and guidance.

An update on the process of self-assessment was provided and results of the observation of teaching & learning process which showed that 93% of staff had met standards in their first annual observation and a further 3% had achieved it through re-observation. Two staff would be leaving the College at the end of the year based on their poor performance.

Governors were invited to attend an observation of teaching and learning session and dates would be sent out once confirmed for next academic year, noting that staff were used to having dual observations.

An update to the quality improvement plan was also given showing a range of additional activities and processes put in place to address both Ofsted and SAR areas for development. It was reported that some compliance issues still remain with the completion of SmartAssessor, the e-portfolio for apprentices and that additional customer relationship management (CRM) software had been introduced.

The Board RESOLVED to:

1. Receive the Teaching, Learning & Assessment report noting continued growth in full time applications
2. Request dates for governors to join teaching and learning observations (MC)

1820 **Search & Governance Committee**

Jon Thedham reported on the last meeting of the Committee held on 1st May and summarised the issues and actions from the accompanying meeting notes. Governors were provided with an updated development & improvement programme giving dates for curriculum visits for next year. Link governor areas had also been agreed and governors not currently involved were asked to volunteer for the vacant links. Jon also requested governor comments on the impact of curriculum visits. Those who had attended felt they were invaluable but recognised the time taken up by managers and staff. It was agreed that the Heads of Schools would be asked for their opinion on the time commitment and other ideas for enabling governors to become familiar with the College.

In respect of the annual appraisal cycle, more information would be provided in the pre-appraisal proforma and governors were asked to complete the form and reflect on board practice before meeting with the Chair which would aim to be completed by the end of September.

The Committee had been requested to review the current structure of the Board and through discussion and a review of alternative models, recommended that the current structure remained in place but would continue to be reviewed.

The skills audit had also been considered noting that a gap would be developing soon for a member from the visitor economy. The Committee also recommended the appointment of John Rawsthorne to the Board which was unanimously agreed.

In respect of committee membership, Rebecca Sandham expressed a preference to move from Search & Governance to Audit & Risk and John Rawsthorne also expressed an interest in joining that committee. Members would be asked about preferences for committee membership as part of performance review.

The Board RESOLVED to:

1. Note the contents of the meeting notes and take assurance that the Committee was achieving its delegated responsibilities
2. Review curriculum visits through consultation with the curriculum Heads of Schools
3. Agree to the link governor scheme additions and request volunteers
4. Agree the appointment of John Rawsthorne to the Board

1821 **Audit & Risk Committee**

Gordon Watson presented the report on the recent meeting of the Committee on 8th May 2018. The Committee had received 3 internal audit reports as well as the updated action plan on previous audits with good progress being made on the recommendations. From the follow up audit, it was reported that 90% of the recommendations had been completed.

The internal audit plan for 2018/19 had also been discussed with more information requested from the internal audit team. It was agreed that the new CEO & Principal be requested to review the plan and recommend any changes to the Board.

The College risk register had been reviewed and accepted, noting actions in place to mitigate identified risks. Policies on safeguarding and whistleblowing had been approved with no significant changes from the previous year.

The Principal had requested that a governor be asked to join the College's Health & Safety Committee to bring external expertise that had been invaluable in the past. However, Eve Martin felt it was inappropriate for a governor to take up this role. Rebecca Sandham said that she was already on the email circulation for the committee and provided comments on papers where appropriate. The Principal felt it was good practice to have an external member and asked governors to see if they could recommend someone who could be asked to join.

The Committee reviewed the gender pay gap for the College that had been published and found no cause for concern.

The Committee had reviewed its performance for the year and made revisions to its terms of reference based on the latest version of the Audit Code of Practice. One item was that staff governors should not be part of audit committees due to potential conflict of interest.

The Board RESOLVED to:

1. Accept the report taking assurance that the Committee was working to its terms of reference
2. Request that the new CEO & Principal review the internal audit plan
3. Recommend someone for membership of the College Health & Safety Committee

1822 **General Data Protection Regulation**

The Director of Finance & Resources provided an update on the College's actions towards implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation that came into effect on 25th May 2018. The draft policy was presented outlining the College's and the Board's responsibilities under the Regulation. Data held on governors was also provided including justification and use of the data. Consent would be checked as part of the annual appraisal process.

Pat Mclver commented that specific responsibilities of staff when handling data and reporting breaches should be included so that everyone is clear about their own involvement. A second issue in respect of retention schedules was raised and Louise Shrapnel confirmed that the policy links closely with the College's retention of data policy. Pat felt it was important to reiterate that data must not be held any longer than required and that active procedures to ensure data was deleted should be included in the policy.

The Board RESOLVED to:

1. Approve the GDPR policy with amendments as above
2. Note data held on governors

1823 **Kendal Museum Update**

The Principal presented an update on the museum following actions taken by the working party. The Heads of terms (v4) were presented for consideration having already been reviewed by Gordon Watson and Eve Martin as part of the group.

A paper noted that it would be the responsibility of South Lakeland District Council to make reasonable repairs to the building before it was handed over and an updated conditions survey would be needed.

The Board RESOLVED to:

1. Agree to progress to the next stage involving a leasing agreement

1824 **Management Accounts**

Management accounts to the end of April 2018 were presented for consideration. Commentary to the accounts identified highest risk areas including the daily monitoring of the cash position. A year end surplus of £54k was forecast which was lower than the forecast for March. Emily Harris commented that the April trade figures looked low and Louise Shrapnel confirmed that a tranche of funding was received in April and that the cash position was monitored daily. Debtors and creditors were well managed with no concerns raised with payments taken up to term with two monthly payment runs. The negative impact of lagged funding was mentioned.

The Board RESOLVED to:

1. Note the financial position to end of April 2018 and the end of year forecast
2. Continue to monitor cashflow

1825 **Castle Dairy**

The bi-annual update on the Castle Dairy Restaurant & Apprenticeship Academy was presented by the Director of Finance & Resources and included an updated staffing structure and new activities that were taking place. It was reported that the restaurant had been awarded 2 AA rosettes, making it the only college restaurant in the country to hold this level of award. Plans for further promotion and notification of awards were included in the report.

In respect of finances, it was reported that, after a challenging year, the Dairy was expected to at least break even this financial year as its reputation grew. Business interruption insurance money was included to reflect the difficulties following the floods in 2016.

Eve Martin questioned the strategic role of the Dairy for the College, whether it was income generation or a centre of excellence. The Principal outlined the benefits to the College of having a fine dining restaurant as part of its curriculum offer and its impact on the reputation of the College and the confidence industry stakeholders have in the College. Eve asked that a business plan for income be considered by the Board and the Chair agreed to include it on the September Board agenda.

The Board RESOLVED to:

1. Note the financial position of the Castle Dairy
2. Receive an update on progress during the first year since the floods
3. Request a review of the business plan at the September meeting

1826 **Collaboration Group Feedback**

Kelvin Nash along with the Corporation Chair and Vice Chair had attended a meeting with their respective colleagues from Lancaster & Morecambe and Craven Colleges where a range of collaborative actions were discussed.

Kelvin confirmed that it had been a productive and open meeting on what each partner hoped to gain from collaborative working. Three outcomes had been agreed:

- a) Curriculum mapping and progression pathways (led by Craven)
- b) Consideration of LEP and stakeholders needs (led by Lancaster & Morecambe)
- c) Develop draft terms of reference based on Cumbria Colleges Ltd (Kendal)

The next meeting was scheduled for 15th June 2018. It was stressed that it was important that staff were made aware of the purpose of the collaboration.

The Board RESOLVED to:

1. Note the outcomes from the first collaborative meeting
2. Receive further updates at the next board meeting

1827 **Any other business**

1. It was approved for Kelvin Nash to be added to the College's bank mandate
2. It was approved for the covenant amendment to the Lloyds Bank loan to be signed by the Chair and Principal

1828 **Date of Next Meeting**

11th July 2018