



1555 PRELIMINARY PROCEDURAL MATTERS

1555.1 Board briefing: Curriculum Intent

An interactive session was provided by the Directors of Curriculum updating members on and with questioning of the curriculum intent and priorities for each curriculum area, which included:

- Consideration and examples of the ways in which learners were prepared with the skills required by employers and the world of work, in particular entrepreneurial elements applicable across professions
- Knowledge of the learner journey and their overall aims and ambitions

The Curriculum Directors were thanked for an interesting presentation.

1555.2 Attendance & Apologies

Present: Mike Carver (Chair)
Nathan Daeche Green
Mike Dempsey
Trish Hawkins
Jo Howell
Ricky Irons
Tony Medhurst
John Sills
Charlotte Simmonds
Ian Richardson
Jan Wing

In Attendance: Jayne Chaplin (Clerk to the Corporation)
Andrew Clare
Angela McLean
Ryan Cowell (*Item 1 only*)
Siobhan Dunne (*Item 1 only*)

Apologies: Warren Gordon

Absent: Luke Taylor

1555.2 Declaration of Interests and Confidential Items

Declarations of Interest were received from:

- Mike Carver in his capacity as a Director of CK Assessment & Training Ltd (Part 2 Agenda) and HRC Cubed.
- Tony Medhurst in his capacity as a Director of HRG Ltd and CK Assessment & Training Ltd (Part 2 Agenda)

Based on the commercially sensitive nature of the matters for discussion, it was **RESOLVED** for those Items forming Part 2 of the Agenda to be taken as confidential Items of business.

1555.3 Minutes of the last Meeting

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 12 July 2019 were approved as a correct record and for the signature of the Chair to be applied.

With all matters covered on the agenda, there were no Matters Arising on which to report.

1555.5 Chair's Report

An oral report was received from the Chair:

- Extended appreciation to those members that had attended the College Self-Assessment Validation Panel meetings, reporting on the value of and staff appreciation for governor involvement in the process.
- Reporting on the success of the recent HE Award Ceremony, commending the achievements of the respective areas and their students. Those members able to attend were thanked for their support.
- Reporting on the various meetings that had taken place with the Principal and confirming the completion of the meetings with members over the summer break, extending appreciation for their time and support.
- Advising members of the letter received from the Chief Executive and Accounting Officer of the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), Eileen Milner, reminding colleges of their responsibilities and outlining changes to be made regarding the Agency's approach to sub-contracting. It was confirmed that receipt of the letter had been acknowledged. The opportunities presented by such activity was observed. Responding to questioning, confirmation was welcomed that the matter had been the subject of discussion and review by Management with a report outlining the proposed approach and plans to be submitted to the next meeting of the Resources Committee for consideration, in advance of presentation to the Corporation in December.
- In the context of discussions the recent departure of governors Mark Eastwood and Philomena Shaughnessy.

The report was noted.

1556 STRATEGIC DISCUSSION

1556.1 Strategy & Policy: Principal's Report

After observing those items discussed elsewhere on the agenda (Minutes 1556.2 and 1556.3 refer), the Principal's Report was received presenting the strategic objectives for the year and providing an overview of the latest national, regional and College activities and developments.

The report was summarised:

- Reviewing the Strategic Objectives proposed for 2019/20:
 - (i) For the improvement of the overall College achievement rate to 88% with an achievement rate of 85% for 16 to 18 year olds on study programmes including English and maths
 - (ii) With the expectation for all students to aspire to 100% attendance in order to achieve but an overall minimum student attendance figure of 90% across all provision;
 - (iii) For the delivery of the financial objectives outlined in the 3-year financial plan and achieve a minimum of “Good” financial health in 2019/20;
 - (iv) To continue to revitalise the curriculum offer to ensure response to local, LEP and national priorities and maximise market opportunities;
 - (v) To proactively seek new partnership opportunities, whilst continuing to develop those already established, in order to enrich and enhance student experience and deliver wider benefits to the College group, recognising how this reflected key commitments in the Strategic Plan and income generation via diversification
 - (vi) To ensure the alignment of the culture with the strategic direction, goals and ambitions of the organisation and enables a sustainable future for the College, noting the addition of the word “ambitions”.
- Noting the range of partnership meetings that had taken place with a variety of stakeholders
- In the context of the security of future funding, particularly in the event of a General Election, discussing the Chancellor's announcement of £400 million additional funding for providers of 16 to 19 education in England.
- Noting the overview of College activity recognising the reassurance provided by the first knife arch exercise at the Broxbourne Campus for the first time.

Following review and discussion, the report was noted and it was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE**:

- the College Strategic Objectives for 2019/20

1556.2 Quality: 2018/19 Learner Outcomes & Quality Improvement

The year-end outcomes were summarised and an oral update was provided on the latest position for performance against the 2018/19 strategic objectives.

The overall trajectory of improvement was recognised with improved retention and attendance rates and, at 85.6%, achievement rates showing performance overall in-line with 2017/18 and the most recent sector benchmark data. Members commended the improved performance in the thirteen out of twenty-eight curriculum areas, noting a further six areas remaining high with achievement over 90% and twenty areas above the national rate. Questioning the performance of the under-performing areas, Construction, Public Services and Access, confirmation was welcomed of improvement by 9.8%, 11.1% and 28.5% respectively with all now to be above the weighted national average. The improvement was commended by members sharing positive feedback of progress particularly in Construction, experienced directly and observed during visits to the area.

Attention then focussed on those areas where performance had not been as anticipated:

- Asking why there had been a 2% decline in overall vocational achievement, noted to be attributed to a predicted 4% decline in 19+ vocational achievement and behind the weighted national average. Responding to questioning, members were advised of three sub-contracting partners not delivering to prediction, confirming that it would be the subject of particular focus going forward; and underperformance in the College based areas of Plumbing, ACAM and Engineering. There was particular questioning of performance in Engineering noting the impact of in-year staffing issues, now resolved with attention now on improving quality and curriculum intent, noting from members observations of improvement emerging.
- Recognising the 1.4% improvement in the combined achievement for Maths and English GCSE high grade but observing the 1.9% decline in GCSE English High Grades. Whilst 3.3% above the national rate, there was question of the decline. After reporting it to be largely attributed to the College strategy for Grade 2 learners, it was noted that data suggested that this approach supported good value added and progress for English.
- Noting that Apprenticeship achievement and timeliness rates highlighted a three-year declining trend. Acknowledging performance to be disappointing and unacceptable, Management confirmed that it was the subject of focussed attention to turn performance around.

After discussion, the report was noted.

1556.3 Finance: 2018/19 Year-end Draft Accounts & 2019/20 Enrolment

A report was presented providing an overview of the overall financial position for the 2018/19 year-end along with the details of year to date enrolment.

Members were advised:

- For the year-end 31 July 2019, of an overall Group position of a group surplus of £172k against the plan of £745k, an adverse surplus variance of £573k. It was reported that the main variance was the FRS102 pension cost of £659k with the deficit on the Scheme increasing by £2,944k in the year.
- In respect of 2019/20, Core College activity to date showed 16-18 enrolment numbers was expected to be in-line with target in contrast with an estimated shortfall in HE income

After noting the consolidated year-end position, discussion included:

- The overall Group position reviewing further the core College result, noting, an operating position of £127k at the end of July 2019, excluding exception items, The work undertaken to establish a sound basis for the current financial year was recognised. Questioning the variance in the FRS102 pension cost, it was noted that the College had no control over the valuation explaining it to be dependent on the market position on the date calculations were finalised.
- Year to date enrolment:

- i. With 16-18 numbers acknowledged to be in-line with target, but questioning why the conversion from applications to enrolments not as expected. Members were advised of ESFA data now showing the reversal in the decline in 16-18 numbers was not expected to materialise until the 2020/21 academic year, corroborated by the College's own review of local data. The improvement in numbers however, was acknowledged.
- ii. Questioning HE numbers noting, in the context of the discussion of 16-18 numbers a corresponding impact on HE enrolment. Members were advised of discussions at Committees noting that further information would be provided to inform future strategic discussion and action to mitigate the position and allow the College to best position its offer and respond to demand in the market.

Following discussion, the report was noted.

1557 STATUTORY & COMPLIANCE: FROM COMMITTEES, REQUIRING FORMAL APPROVAL

1557.1 From Search & Governance Committee, 16/10/19

An overview was provided of the business considered at the meeting and those items requiring formal review or action were then presented, comprising:

1557.1a Board Membership & Appointments

There was an update on membership developments since the last meeting, noting that:

- Following the departure over the summer of Mark Eastwood and Philomena Shaughnessy, a recruitment campaign had been undertaken and applications were considered.
- The Committee had considered a proposal to engage the services of an external agency to assist in identifying possible candidates for the role of Corporation Chair acknowledging the value of the far wider network available from which to locate potential candidates.

The Committee's recommendations were summarised, following which it was **RESOLVED**:

- To **APPROVE** the **APPOINTMENT** of Judith Wickes as Governor for a term of office of four years; and subject to a meeting with the Search Committee, To **APPROVE** the **APPOINTMENT** of Victoria Bew as Governor for a term of office of four years.
- To **APPROVE** the proposal to engage the services of an external agency to assist in identifying possible candidates for the role of Corporation Chair.

1557.2 Quality, Standards & Business Planning Committee, 09/10/19

After observing those items discussed elsewhere on the agenda (Minute 1556.2 refers), an overview was provided of the business considered at the meeting and those items requiring formal review or action were then presented, along with the Safeguarding Annual Report, comprising:

1557.2a Safeguarding & Prevent

Members reviewed the:

- Safeguarding Policy and Procedure, updated in-line with the latest guidelines, noting particularly amendments to reflect the introduction of the new offences in law of up-skirting, young people involved in serious violence; and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage forming part of so called 'honour based' violence.
- Safeguarding Annual Report, providing an overview of activity for 2018/19, noting the key developments and improvements; and those areas identified for focus during 2019/20

After consideration, and on the recommendation of the Quality, Standards & Business Planning Committee, it was **RESOLVED** to:

- **APPROVE** the updated Safeguarding Policy and Procedure

1557.3 Resources Committee, 09/10/19

After observing those items discussed elsewhere on the agenda (Minute 1556.3 refers), an overview was provided of the business considered at the meeting and those items requiring formal review or action were then presented:

1557.3a Sub-Contracting: 2018/19 Year-End & 2019/20 Arrangements

The report provided confirmation of update on the year-end closing position against contract for the College's subcontracting activity and presented proposed contractual allocations and current performance for 2019/20.

The 2018/19 year-end closing position was noted. After observing discussions elsewhere on the agenda (Minute 1555.5 refers). Members then considered the current sub-contractor activity proposals and potential opportunities:

- Reflecting on the rationale and contract values proposed for each provider. There was question of those recommended for CK Assessment following its performance against target during 2018/19. Confirmation was welcomed of strong learner recruitment currently to programmes of Study and a steady start with recruitment to non-levy Apprenticeship programmes.
- Members then were advised of a further opportunity being explored by Management with a construction training centre in Waltham Forest, managed by Dudley College, a Grade 1 College.
- With potential subcontracting relationships being considered with two possible Higher Education (HE) partners. It was confirmed that due diligence had already been undertaken with both considered to represent experienced, low risk practitioners. It was noted however that at this stage it was imperative to be confident about the capacity to deliver with such activity requiring more specialist resourcing, highlighting the particular compliance requirements of the HE regulatory framework. Members were advised that an independent review was currently being undertaken to better inform any final decision.

Acknowledging the benefits of the partnership opportunities presented, the need was recognised for timely action in progressing matters as and when outstanding issues were resolved.

After consideration, and on the recommendation of the Resources Committee, it was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE**:

- The revised and final contract values for sub-contracted provision for 2018/19.
- The proposed contract allocations and values for 2019/20 in-line with the College Financial Plan for sub-contracted provision and providers.
- In principle, the proposed partnership arrangements for AEB and HE activity; and to **AUTHORISE** liaison between Management and the Chair of the Corporation and Chair of the Resources Committee regarding any action necessary.

1558.3b Committee Terms of Reference

The Committee's updated Terms of Reference were presented, amended in-line with good practice. On the recommendation of the Resources Committee, it was **RESOLVED** to:

- **APPROVE** the Committee's updated Term of Reference

1558.4 From Audit Committee, Internal Audit Strategy & 2019/20 Plan

The Internal Audit Strategy and Plan for 2019/20 were received. Members were advised that with the new Internal Audit Service only appointed at the July 2019 meeting, it had not been possible to provide at that time the Audit Strategy and Plan for 2019/20 and it was now presented to avoid delay in the commencement of the audit cycle.

Following review by the Audit Committee, the Plan proposed for the year was summarised, comprising system and process reviews with 42 days of activity scheduled along with a further 3.25 days for an external sub-contracting assurance review.

On the recommendation of the Audit Committee, it was **RESOLVED** to:

- **APPROVE** the Internal Audit Strategy and Plan for 2019/20.

1559 OTHER BUSINESS & DATE OF NEXT MEETING

1559.1 Any Other Business

None advised.

1559.2 Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 12 December 2019, 5.00pm

Friday 24 January 2020, Annual Conference

Wednesday 25 March 2020, 5.00pm

With the business forming Part 1 concluded, the meeting moved to the Part 2 confidential agenda at this point.

Signed.



Date: 12 December 2019

Mike Carver, Chair