

HERTFORD REGIONAL COLLEGE
Employer & Community Engagement Committee
23rd November 2015.

Present: Ken Ayling (Chair)
Tony Medhurst (Principal)
Warren Gordon (by phone)
Patsy Spears

In Attendance:
Katrina Dougherty (Interim VP Enterprise
& Innovation)
Nicola Conibear (Dir: Academic Quality and
Development)
John Fowl (Clerk to the Corporation)

202. Apologies for Absence.

Apologies were received from Jan Wing.

203. Declarations of Interest.

- Ken Ayling declared an interest as a Broxbourne BC councillor in the Waltham Cross Next Step Centre and Ambition Broxbourne.
- Tony Medhurst declared his interest as a member of Ambition Broxbourne.

204. To Approve the Minutes of the Meeting Held on 28th May 2015

The Minutes were approved.

205. Matters Arising.

Item 196. The Chair advised that Haileybury Turnford was keen not to compete with the HE programmes offered by the College.

Item 197. A new Head of Functional skills was now in post but it was too soon to see improvement to the level that was required.

Item 198. It was confirmed that it was still the wish of the Committee that employers should be invited to meet with the Members. Katrina Dougherty agreed to give this some more thought as to how best to do this.

Item 199. The Title of the Committee is still to be considered

206. Marketing Update.

Nicola Conibear advised the Committee of the pre and post enrolment marketing that was in place.

Warren Gordon expressed the view that all of the reports to the committee were about events rather than informing the Governor of the impact such events had achieved with regard to student recruitment. This sentiment was shared by the other governors present.

Members queried why it was taking so long to fill the vacancies within the Marketing Team? It was explained that the vacancies had occurred with the departures of the Online Manager and the Engagement Officer. It was now proving difficult to recruit suitable persons to these positions.

An appointment was made to the Engagement Officer position but the person is now on maternity leave and recruitment of an interim Engagement Officer is now underway to cover the period of maternity leave.

Governors discussed the issues affecting the Marketing Team and it was confirmed that whilst an apprentice may help this would not satisfy the full needs of the team.

Members considered the content of the report and questioned what the impact of the various marketing initiatives had been by way of improved enrolment. ie impact.

The Committee sought clarification as to whether there was a high level of dropout after students had gone through the registration process. The Principal stated that this was an area that was under close scrutiny but also that more focus was needed on those who whilst making an inquiry were not fully committed to the College as their chosen course provider.

Governors discussed the need for different approaches to attract the different strands of potential recruits and the Principal outlined the steps currently being taken.

It was acknowledged that the College needed to have a sound Marketing Strategy in place for 2016 and the Principal is working with other senior staff to ensure things go forward as needed.

Members noted that there were 4 marketing campaigns planned or in train in order to improve recruitment numbers.

It was **Resolved** that the Report be Received.

207. Business Solutions and Apprenticeships Update.

Again Governors were of the opinion that the report was about events rather than about the impact of them. Having considered the content of the report a view was promulgated that there may be an issue of whether the College is moving in the right direction in order to ensure expansion.

In reviewing the Success Rates by age range it was recognised that there was a significant reduction in the rate for 24yrs+ when compared with National Averages. The achievement of Timely success was considered to be a problem of delivery in some departments.

The Assessor for English has resigned and the College is currently trying to recruit a replacement. Governors were told that the College needed to be more flexible in its delivery model for apprenticeships and not to be constrained by timetabling issues.

Despite the adverse issues discussed the committee was told that compared to the majority of colleges HRC was doing well with regard to Apprenticeships.

Concern was expressed that in the year 2014-15 the college had not managed to use all of the funding that had been allocated for apprenticeships and were informed that steps had been taken to ensure this did not occur in 2015-16.

It was **Resolved** that the Report be Received.

208. Adult Education Update.

Katrina Dougherty advised that she is producing a strategy aimed to improve the community engagement aspect of the College programmes.

A view was articulated that the Committee needs to examine some of the identified risks in the report that impact on this area of work.

The Next Step centre at Bishops Stortford is now closed and the Broxbourne BC has indicated that the council will no longer be able to subsidise the Waltham Cross Next Step Centre. With no new starts expected on the Vision2learn initiative this year the viability of the centre is also under threat especially as the Next Steps programmes are now being offered at the main college centres. There is very low levels of unemployment in Broxbourne BC and so the whole area of this provision needs to be reconsidered.

A view was shared that the academic departments need to interact better with the wider community. The Principal outlined the possibility of building the right type of team to deliver the various programmes on offer.

The Committee members requested that they receive by email an interim progress report on the Next Step Centres by 18th December 2015.

It was **Resolved** that the Report be Received.

209. Any Other Business.

There was no other business.

210. Date of The Next Meeting.

The next meeting will take place on 11th February 2016.