

CORPORATION
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 13 DECEMBER 2022
AT BISHOP BURTON COLLEGE AT 5.30 PM

PRESENT: Mr K Kendall (Vice-Chair), Mr B Meredith (Principal); Dr S Hamer; Mr J Hurst; Mr I Sackree; Ms A Moran; Mr A Milner, Ms S Kirby; Ms R Brassington; Ms V Shannon; Mr M Thomas, Ms L Horsefield; Mr P Phythian; Ms E Milson; Mr A Milner.

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms C Sykes (Clerk); Ms K Calvert (Deputy Principal – HR and Organisational Services “DPHROS”); Mr S Kelly (Finance Director); Ms K Lord (Deputy Principal & Deputy Chief Executive “DPCEO”); Mr D Blackburn (Director of IT and Learner Resources “DITLR”); Mr J Richardson (Farm Manager); Mr R Lewis (Financial Statements Auditor “FSA”)

Ahead of the meeting, Members took part in a workshop titled “Environmental Sustainability and Net Zero on the College Farm” presented by Mr J Richardson and Mr D Blackburn.

In the absence of the Chair, the meeting was chaired by Mr K Kendall (Vice-Chair).

Ahead of the meeting, the Chair welcomed the new Governors Mr P Phythian and Ms E Milson to their first Corporation meeting.

22.18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mr A Menzies, Ms K Sutton, Mr J Wells, Ms V Shannon.

22.19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Ms K Lord declared an interest in agenda item 11.3.

Ms S Pearson declared an interest in agenda item 16.

22.20 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

- i. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 18 October 2022, along with the confidential minutes. The minutes were **APPROVED** as an accurate record and were signed by the Chair.
- ii. The Clerk noted that all actions from the previous meeting are completed, or included on the agenda of this meeting of the Corporation.
- iii. There were no other matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

22.21 ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

The draft environmental sustainability strategy was presented for approval. It was noted that there were five key areas (Curriculum, Campus, Farm, Workforce and Community).

In response to a Member’s question, it was confirmed that students had not yet been involved in the drafting or had been consulted for their views so far, due to the draft status. It was confirmed that involvement of students is a priority and would be factored in through the development.

Action: Exec / Sustainability Committee

Members requested more detail on KPI's linked with the document and who would be responsible for monitoring and measuring progress. It was confirmed that the lead for Environment and Sustainability at the College reports on progress to the SLG and Executive on an annual basis. Members reflected that 'Our Future – to ensure the College's sustainable future' is one of the Colleges four strategic aims, and agreed a need for a governance focus on progress in this area.

Action: Director of Governance / Principal.

Members noted that the current management arrangements were not reflective on the Strategic Aims, Objectives and priorities of the College and noted a previous request to the executive to consider this as part of future staffing. It was confirmed that staffing requests are approved on a basis of need and there currently many requests awaiting approval following operational review by the Executive team. It was agreed that a review of the management of this work would be revisited.

Action: Principal

Members expressed the future of the College and how as an educational institution it must be at the forefront of developments and needs to ensure learners are exposed to opportunities involving new technologies and innovative future potentials.

The Principal noted that Landex and Agrii both have launched sustainability groups and the College will be part of these going forward, in addition the work within the IoT to support carbon reduction in agriculture puts the College at the forefront of these new opportunities and shared this knowledge with the wider community.

The Farm Manager provided an open invitation to interested Governors to visit the farm and the work done to date to gain a greater insight into achievements and progress so far.

Action: Director of Governance / Farm Manager

It was confirmed that much of the key objectives in the draft document were implemented in terms of curriculum delivery, so whilst the key missing areas could be reviewed. As an initial indication of progress made this was an acceptable document, however members expressed the need for further review due to the fundamental relationship to the vision of the organisation and the long term monitoring of the document in line with the strategic aims and objectives. It was agreed that further work would be undertaken and an updated document be presented at the next meeting.

Action: Director of Governance / Principal

The **Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan** was **APPROVED** as a first draft document and will be represented in March 2023.

22.22 STUDENT ASSOCIATION REPORT – DECEMBER 2022

The student governor presented the report which was taken as read. She provided a further verbal update on discussions points of the Student Leadership Committee (SLC) to date, which included:

- Making connections with external partners (e.g. the Police) for Mental Health Support
- Tackling harassment, domestic violence and antisocial behaviours
- Quiet spaces at both campuses
- Animal Welfare
- Litter

Members thanked the student governor for her update and highlighted some key issues that required addressing. It was confirmed that the Principal or DPCEO would attend the next meeting of the SLC to pick up some of the points raised.

The **Student Association Report – December 2022** was **RECEIVED**.

22.23 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

- i. To receive and consider the Safeguarding Report

The Members **RESOLVED** that the Safeguarding Report should be considered confidential. In the absence of the APSRS the Safeguarding Link Governors provided members with the updates. Members' questions are recorded in the Confidential Minutes.

- ii. To receive and consider the Principal's Report

The Members **RESOLVED** that the Principal's Report should be considered confidential. The Principal took the Members through the Report and Members' questions are recorded in the Confidential Minutes.

The **Safeguarding Report** and **Principal's Report** were **RECEIVED**.

22.24 COLLEGE PERFORMANCE REPORTS

- i. **To receive and consider the Annual Report on Gifts & Hospitality**

The Principal presented the report for information. It was noted that there was one missing numerical value from appendix 1. It was confirmed that this would be completed and the paper resent to governors for information.

Action: Director of Governance / Clerk

- ii. **To receive and consider the Annual Report on Sponsorship of People/ Events**

The Principal presented the report which was taken as read. Member's asked about the sponsorship of the Yorkshire Post Country Week, which had not been continued for the 2022-23 academic year, as this has a strong agricultural following. The Principal noted that this was being done, but in a different way. The Principal also noted that there is a new Marketing Director now in post who brings new ideas and opportunities.

The **College Performance Reports** were **RECIEVED**.

22.25 CURRICULUM AND QUALITY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE BUSINESS

- i. **To receive and consider the draft minutes of the Curriculum and Quality Enhancement Committee meeting held on 17 November 2022**

The Chair of the Committee presented the draft minutes of the meeting and the following items for corporation approval. She highlighted that the committee had requested more information on the drop-in attendance across the College and had previously asked further detailed data on recruitment data relating to gender, parental status and caring responsibilities and if there were any reflections on this in terms of greater needs for support, attendance and achievement. It was also confirmed that ongoing conversations on Higher Education (HE) continue and with the support of the new Assistant Principal HE in the department, there is work ongoing to ensure mitigations are made and students numbers improve.

The **draft minutes of the Curriculum and Quality Enhancement Committee meeting held on 17 November 2022** were **RECEIVED**.

ii. To receive and approve on the recommendation of the Curriculum & Quality Enhancement Committee the FE Self-Assessment Report for 2021/22

The FE Self-Assessment Report for 2021/22 was presented for approval. Members noted concern to the amendment of all judgements which have been downgraded from grade 1 to 2, with some curriculum areas self-assessing as a grade 3. Members confirmed that whilst the content and detail in the report was acceptable and is a detailed and accurate representation of the current position, they expressed dissatisfaction that communication on these issues had been limited; particularly in that the College is due an imminent Ofsted inspection, and the performance decline in this report was unexpected.

The DPCEO noted that the majority of this report is data driven, and was unavailable until November 2023, and includes factors such as a 10% drop in achievement. Relating to leadership and management there are internal issues the Corporation is aware of such as results from the staff survey and Investors in People (IIP) report, as well as high levels of turnover. It was noted that all FE colleges are facing very similar challenges at this time.

Members confirmed that changes to student behaviours brought about over the past 2 years have had and continue to place significant pressures the College and its staff. They noted that in line with the data and the other known factors that the self-assessment of performance is an accurate reflection of performance, however noted their concern in that as a collective, the Corporation must be prepared and aware of changes such as this on a more regular basis. Noting the importance for Governors to be able to explain to an inspector e.g. Ofsted the reasons for the decline and provide explanation as such.

For assurance, it was confirmed that the report was validated by Myerscough College and that the decline is what is seen as a national trend across all Colleges caused by the disruption from COVID. It was also noted that with some changes in senior leadership, the report reflects and accurate reflection on the College's current position and how it can move forward to improve for learners.

The FE Self-Assessment Report for 2021/22 was APPROVED.

iii. To receive and approve on the recommendation of the Curriculum & Quality Enhancement Committee the HE Self-Evaluation Document for 2021/22

The HE Self-Evaluation Document was presented for approval. The Chair of the Committee noted the discussions at committee about HE at the College and the many conservations around the ongoing decline in recruitment.

There were no further comments or questions on the report.

The HE Self-Evaluation Document for 2021/22 was APPROVED

iv. To consider and approve on the recommendation of the Curriculum & Quality Enhancement Committee the FE Quality Improvement Plan 2021/22

The FE Quality Improvement Plan 2021/22 was presented for approval. It was confirmed that Maths remains the main challenge for improvement. It was also noted that as many students have faced a first year of exams, there is a large proportion who need additional support (mental health, reader, scribes) to complete the exams.

It was also confirmed that the College is focusing on providing a better gateway to support learners with internal progression from FE to HE.

The FE Quality Improvement Plan 2021/22 was APPROVED.

It was confirmed that the HE QIP would also require approval but had been omitted from the agenda in error, however would be circulated via e-mail for approval.

Action: Director of Governance / Clerk

v. To consider and approve on the recommendation of the Curriculum & Quality Enhancement Committee the Quality Strategy 2022/23

The Quality Strategy was presented for information, there were no questions or concerns raised.

The **Quality Strategy 2022/23** was **APPROVED**.

22.26 AUDIT COMMITTEE BUSINESS

i. To receive and consider the draft minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 25 November 2022

The Members **RESOLVED** that the draft minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 25 November 2022 should be considered confidential.

The Chair of the Committee took the Members through the Report and Members' questions are recorded in the Confidential Minutes.

The **draft minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 25 November 2022** were **RECEIVED**.

ii. To consider and approve on the recommendation of the Audit Committee the Regularity Audit Self-Assessment Questionnaire.

The Members **RESOLVED** that the **Regularity Audit Self-Assessment Questionnaire** should be considered confidential.

The Chair of the Committee took the Members through the Report and Members' questions are recorded in the Confidential Minutes.

The **Regularity Audit Self-Assessment Questionnaire** was **APPROVED**.

At this point Mr R Lewis (FSA) joined the meeting.

iii. To consider and approve on the recommendation of the Audit Committee the Member's Report and Financial Statements including the Regularity Audit Report for 2021/22

The Members **RESOLVED** that the Member's Report and Financial Statements including the Regularity Audit Report for 2021/22 should be considered confidential.

The Financial Statements Auditor took the Members through the Report and Members' questions are recorded in the Confidential Minutes.

The **Member's Report and Financial Statements including the Regularity Audit Report for 2021/22** were **APPROVED**.

iv. To consider and approve on the recommendation of the Audit Committee the Management Letter on Financial Statements for 2021/22 including Final Regularity Audit

The Members **RESOLVED** that the **Management Letter on Financial Statements for 2021/22 including Final Regularity Audit** should be considered confidential.

The **Management Letter on Financial Statements for 2021/22 including Final Regularity Audit** was **APPROVED**.

- v. **To consider and approve on the recommendation of the Audit Committee the Audit Committee Annual Report 2021-22**

The Members **RESOLVED** that the **Audit Committee Annual Report 2021-22** should be considered confidential.

The **Audit Committee Annual Report 2021-22** was **APPROVED**.

At this point Mr R Lewis left the meeting.

22.27 FINANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE BUSINESS

- i. **To receive and consider the minutes of the Finance & Resources Committee meeting held on 18 October 2022**

The Chair of the Committee noted the minutes of the meeting held 18 October 2022, noting that a verbal update of the meeting had been provided at the Corporation meeting held 13 December 2022. There were no queries raised with the minutes of the meeting.

The **minutes of the Finance & Resources Committee meeting held on 18 October 2022** were **RECEIVED**.

- ii. **To receive and consider the verbal update of the Finance and Resources Committee meeting held on 13 December 2022**

The Chair of the committee noted the discussion points from the meeting held earlier in the day of which items follow on this agenda.

Of those items not appearing on this agenda, it was confirmed that the DPHROS had presented a termly HR report which had given greater detail as requested at the previous meeting to include progress on pay & reward and job evaluation. The current level of staff absences (minus Covid) was in line with previous pre-pandemic absence; and a deeper dive into staff conduct including the reasons for this provided insight into a need for training for newer manager. It was highlighted that the data whilst increased in number has reasonable management assurances and a range of implemented actions and reasons. Finally, there was a report on leavers and destinations, of which many colleges are reporting the same issues and the majority of staff are leaving teaching to return to industry.

The **verbal update of the Finance and Resources Committee meeting held on 13 December 2022** was **RECEIVED**.

- iii. **To receive and consider the Management Accounts to 31 October 2022, including Debtors Report**

The Chair of the Committee noted Management Accounts to 31 October 2022, including Debtors Report. Members' questions are recorded in the Confidential Minutes.

The **Management Accounts to 31 October 2022, including Debtors Report** was **RECEIVED**.

- iv. **To receive and consider an update on the Estates Report, and approve on the recommendation of the Finance & Resources Committee the submission of a bid to the T-Level Capital Fund**

The Chair of the Committee noted the Estates Report, including the submission of a bid to the T-Level Capital Fund. Members' questions are recorded in the Confidential Minutes.

The **Estates Report** was **RECEIVED**. The **submission of a bid to the T-Level Capital Fund** was **APPROVED**.

v. **To approve on the recommendation of the Finance & Resources Committee the Equality and Diversity Report 2020-21 & 2021-22**

The Chair of the Committee noted the Equality and Diversity Report 2020-21 & 2021-22. Members' questions are recorded in the Confidential Minutes

The **Equality and Diversity Report 2020-21 & 2021-22** was **APPROVED**.

vi. **To approve on the recommendation of the Finance & Resources Committee the Health & Safety Report 2021-22**

The Chair of the Committee noted the Health & Safety Report 2021-22. Members' questions are recorded in the Confidential Minutes.

The **Health & Safety Report 2021-22** was **APPROVED**.

22.28 GOVERNANCE

i. **To consider and approve the Review of Confidential Items for the period July 2021 to July 2022**

The Clerk noted the document which was taken as read. The Clerk noted that there had been no requests for information. Members agreed that there should be no changes to the confidential items and that they should remain confidential.

The **Review of Confidential Items for the period July 2021 to July 2022** was **APPROVED**.

ii. **To consider and approve the Review of Compliance against the AoC Good Code of Governance**

The Clerk noted the report which was taken as read. It was confirmed that the review against the new code has been completed against the revised code (Sept 2021). The Clerk encouraged Members to review the document as an important tool to monitor compliance and to identify areas for improvement and non-compliance through an action plan.

Members noted how the evidence against of the items provided assurance against the boards work and indication of a good standard of governance in the organisation. It was confirmed that the next review of the code and completed action plan would be reported in July annually, unless there is a change to the published code.

Action: Director of Governance

The **Review of Compliance against the AoC Good Code of Governance** was **APPROVED**.

iii. **To consider and approve proposal for an External Board Review**

The Clerk noted the paper with the recommendation to conduct an external board review for the spring term 2023-24, Members questions are recorded in the Confidential Minutes.

The proposal for an **External Board Review** was **APPROVED**.

22.29 CHANGE TO THE COLLEGE BANK MANDATE.

The CFO noted the proposals for changes to the College bank mandate following a number of new staff appointments at a senior level. There were no questions or objections raised.

The changes to the Bank Mandate was **APPROVED**.

22.30 POLICES

To consider and approve the Whistleblowing Policy 7.17

The Principal presented the whistleblowing policy for approval with minor amendments highlighted. Members noted that there was no detail included in the policy on how a person may make a disclose and it was requested contact details be included.

The **Whistleblowing Policy** was **APPROVED** subject to the addition of the contact details.

22.31 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Teaching Excellent Framework (TEF) 2023.

There was one item of other business which had been circulated ahead of the meeting regarding the Teaching Excellent Framework (TEF) 2023. It was noted that previous data would indicate that the college be graded at a dissatisfactory level. The Principal noted that the outcomes for learners are not particularly strong, but are similar to other land-based colleges. It was proposed that the college prepares for the TEF 2027 instead.

Members asked about the financial implication which was a reduced maximum fee of £9000 rather than £9250 per student. Members agreed it would not be suitable to complete a submission for 2023.

Members **APPROVED** the proposal to not complete a **TEF 2023** provider submission.

22.32 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 28 March 2023 at 5.30 pm, Riseholme College.

There been no further business the meeting concluded at 19:40.

Signed: Chair.....
Name.....
Date.....