



Board of the Corporation

Minutes of a meeting of the Board of the Corporation

held in the Albert Croney Suite on
Tuesday 10th May at 5.30pm.

Present:

Mr T Edwards (Chairman), Ms K Redhead (Principal and Chief Executive), Mr G Marshall, Mrs C Richards, Mr G Gibson, Mrs G Granath, Mrs S Nicholson, Ms A Form, Mr P Murray (Observer)

Apologies:

Mr M Short, Mr J Davies.

In attendance:

Mr C Todd (Director of Finance and Resources), Mrs S Errington, (Director of Business Development), Mr N Lister Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality, Mr M Sowerby, (Clerk to the Corporation).

1. Introduction

1.1. The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting especially Mr Murray who was attending the meeting as an Observer. Members were informed that the Chairman and the Clerk had met with Mr Murray who is Commercial and Financial Director at NCFE and suggested he attend this meeting to help a decision to join the Board.

1.2. The Chairman informed Members that due to the demanding work commitment of the Vice-Principal during the Ofsted inspection it had been agreed that his two reports would be tabled at tonight's meeting. Reading time will be allocated prior to both reports.

2. Declarations of Interest

2.1. There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of a meeting of the Board of the Corporation held on Tuesday 22nd March 2016

Matters arising:

3.1. Item 2. Safeguarding and Prevent online training. The Clerk asked Members who had not yet completed the training to do so as soon as possible. The Clerk is to make arrangements for Mr Gibson and Mr Davies to complete the training at the College.

3.2. Item 4.4. Learning Walks. The Chairman advised Members that due to the Ofsted inspection, progress in this matter has been slightly delayed. The Chairman is to meet with the Clerk and Vice-Principal next week to finalise the proposal and bring it to the Board.

3.3. Item 8.4.3. The Business Continuity Plan Review. The Director of Finance and Resources confirmed that the Chairman's contact details had now been included and the Plan has been finalised and published.

3.4. Item 10.2.2. FE Week. The Clerk informed Members that FE Week is now available for Members to access from the Governance Portal.

Agreed:

3.5. THAT the Board receive the minutes as a true record.

4. Chairman's verbal report

The Chairman's report consisted of the following items:

- Area Review update
- Ofsted Inspection

4.1. Area Review Update

4.1.1. The Chairman informed Members that the first meeting of the Area Review Steering Group has been postponed until the 14th September. The postponement was at the request of the North East Combined Authority (NECA) who felt they were not sufficiently prepared to lead and chair the meetings. The large volume of work done so far will still be valid and we will have the opportunity to upgrade and in certain areas improve the data. The dates of the further Steering Group meetings have yet to be decided.

4.1.2. The Chairman informed Members that he was a member of the North East Area Review Chairs Group. The meetings provide a good opportunity to discuss issues of concern, ideas and proposals. One meeting has taken place so far and the next meeting is to take place on Friday at the offices of Ward Hadaway in Newcastle. The guest speaker at the meeting is to be John Taylor from the Joint Area Review Delivery Unit (JARDU) who will be advising the Chairs of the things learnt to date from the Area Reviews. The Chairman informed Members that the Principal will, later in the meeting, be advising Members of her involvement with a NECA Task Group. Information obtained from both groups will be exchanged between the Chairman and Principal.

4.1.3. The Chairman informed Member that due to the amount of additional time and work involved in the Area Review process, remuneration for Chairs involved in the process has been agreed with the Charity Commission. The AoC has produced a template for institutions to follow but it is up to each individual college to approve the remuneration before submitting a case to the Charity Commission. The Clerk is to

arrange for a Remuneration Task Group to meet and review the proposal and a recommendation will be presented to a future meeting of the Board. The AoC guidance excludes the Chairman from any involvement in any part of the remuneration proposal or process.

4.2. Ofsted inspection

4.2.1. The Chairman thanked all Members who were able to contribute to the Ofsted Inspection. Although we do not have written confirmation of the outcomes, it appeared to be a very positive inspection and the role played by Members at the meeting with the Inspector was very significant.

Agreed:

4.3. THAT the Board receive the Chairman's report.

5. *Principal's report*

5.1 The Principal presented her report which included the following:

- 2015/16 Performance against funding targets:
- Area Reviews:
- Ofsted Inspection:
- French visitors.

5.2 2015/2016 Performance against targets. Confidential item

5.3. Area Reviews

5.3.1. The Principal informed Members that the College had received an extremely late notification that the North East Area Review had been deferred from Wave 3 to Wave 4. The College had worked extremely hard to achieve the submission target date. The Area Review will now commence on the 14th September and is expected to conclude around February/March.

5.3.2. Members were advised that the AoC continues to support Colleges and they have a dedicated web page which is well worth reading. Reports from earlier reviews are still not available. The Principal informed Members that a number of staff meetings have taken place and staff updates will be provided as the process gets underway.

5.3.3. Following a question from the Chairman, Staff Members confirmed that staff were pleased that the review was not happening yet, although they knew that it was still going to take place. The uncertainty of what the future may hold was obviously a concern for staff.

5.3.4. The Chairman assured Members that the Board will have the right to refuse any proposal resulting from the review but the Board will have to defend their decision. The Principal advised Members that the College has a very positive story to tell. Andrew Hodgson, the guest of honour at one of the Awards Events, thinks

that the College is unique and special and had stated that view to Ofsted during the recent inspection.

5.3.5. The Principal informed Members that she was very pleased to have been invited, as the FE Principals representative, onto the NECA Education and Skills Task Group (see 4.1.2). The first meeting of the group is to take place on Thursday and will focus on preparing for the Area Review. The group will have a very important role as NECA and the NELEP will be influential in the review process and the devolution of the Adult Education budget.

Agreed:

5.3.6. THAT the Board note the current situation.

5.4. Ofsted Inspection

5.4.1. The Principal informed Members that she was notified on Friday 22nd April that the College was to have a full inspection commencing on Tuesday 26th April and ending on Friday 29th April. Fortunately, it had been recognised that the dip in 2013/14 success rates caused by the College taking over a failed SFA contract would have set some triggers off, preparations for a full inspection had already been made.

5.4.2. Members were informed that the inspection framework is still relatively new and now focusses on assessing skills and tracking learners. Many colleges inspected since the introduction of the new framework have experienced a decline in grade profiles. The Principal confirmed that the outcomes for the College are very pleasing but until the report on our inspection is published we are unable to publicise any outcomes.

5.4.3. The Principal thanked Members, managers and staff for their input and involvement in the process.

5.5. French Visitors

5.5.1. The Principal informed Members that as part of the counties link with Academie d'Amiens, two senior staff visited the College on Friday 29th April to look at apprenticeship provision and vocational training. The visit had been very positive.

5.5.2. Following a question it was confirmed that it had been agreed that contact between the two institutions would be maintained and a reciprocal visit may take place in the future.

Agreed:

5.6. THAT the Board note the contents of the report.

6. *Finance and Resources Reports*

6.1. Finance Report up to period 8 (31st March 2016) Confidential item

7. Curriculum and Quality Reports

Reading time was allocated prior to each of the following two tabled reports

7.1. Teaching, Learning and Assessment report (Spring Term)

7.1.1. The Vice-Principal Curriculum and Quality outlined the background to the report and the observation process. Members were advised that of the 83 observations undertaken to date, 94% have been graded good or better.

7.1.2. The Vice-Principal Curriculum and Quality highlighted some of the strengths and areas for improvement identified following the analysis of the observations. Members were provided with details of the proposed actions to be taken. These included:

- Further CPD activity:
- Embedding Mathematics into vocational lessons:
- Smart Assessor development:
- Embedding British Values.

7.1.3. Following questions the Vice-Principal Curriculum and Quality confirmed that:

- Staff CPD will take place at the end of May and will focus on the above areas:
- The College is working with Partners to get them more involved in observations. The Vice-Principal Curriculum and Quality described the observation process used with the Partners:
- The number of observations each year is not set but depends upon what is needed.

7.1.4. The Principal informed Members that although observations in new partner organisations always take place, all other observations are risk based as it is not possible to observe everyone.

Agreed:

7.1.5. THAT the Board note the current situation.

7.2. Outcomes for Learners report (Term Two)

7.2.1. The Vice-Principal Curriculum and Quality presented the report and advised Members that the report was an in-year analysis of predicted success rates. The Vice-Principal Curriculum and Quality then highlighted the key points within the report.

7.2.2. Members were advised that overall success predictions were very positive. Improvements are predicted in all categories of Classroom Learning Provision and Employer Responsive Apprenticeship Provision. The Vice-Principal Curriculum and Quality provided Members with further details of the predicted improvements. The Vice-Principal Curriculum and Quality then highlighted the positive predicted timely success rates in Employer Responsive Apprenticeship Provision.

7.2.3. Following a request from the Chairman, the Vice-Principal Curriculum and Quality explained the difference between timely and overall success. Members were informed that learner timely success was claimed within 90 days of the end of a course, whereas overall learner success may occur sometime after 90 days of the course ending.

7.2.4. Members were informed that the predicted success rates had been recognised by the Ofsted inspection team and they had commented positively on how the College focussed assiduously on learner outcomes.

7.2.5. Following further questions the Vice-Principal Curriculum and Quality and the Principal confirmed that:

- Apprenticeship performance at the College is better than the national average. Nationally apprenticeships have been in decline but we have risen year on year by 1%:
- Ofsted had used three year trend data but 2013/14 was the most recent data used because 2014/15 data is still not available:
- 2014/15 performance data for the College will still be affected by former Future Strategies level three learners:
- Benchmarking against other colleges will be quoted in future reports.

Agreed:

7.2.6. THAT the Board note the current situation.

8. *Board Matters*

8.1. Training and Effectiveness

8.1.1. The Clerk informed Members that the Policy Update webinar by Martin Doel is now available from the AoC archive.

8.1.2. The Clerk informed Members that he was not aware of any regional training events or seminars taking place between now and the next meeting of the Board.

9. *Next meeting Agenda*

9.1. Items for the next meeting include:

- Declarations of Interest
- Minutes of the previous meeting
- Draft minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 4th July 2016
- Chairman's verbal report
- Principal's report including the Staff survey 2015/16
- Finance report and Management accounts.
- 2016/2017 Budget, three year financial forecasts report and Risk management report
- Quality Improvement Plan termly update report
- Partnership Report (Spring Term)

11. *Any other business*

11.1. A Member expressed her appreciation and thanks to all staff involved with the inspection. All Members agreed.

12. *Date of next meeting*

12.1. The date of the next meeting is Tuesday 19th July at 5.30pm.

The meeting closed at 6.55pm