



**Minutes of the Meeting of the Corporation
held on Tuesday 21 April 2015**

Present: - Mrs Val Ainsworth (Chair)
Miss Julia Ambury
Mr Igor Andronov
Cllr Sebastian Bowen
Mr James Caird
Mr Tony Ford
Mr Richard Garnett
Mrs Debbie Lambert
Dr Alan Lavers
Mr Norman Moon
Mrs Elizabeth Patrick
Mr Ian Peake (Principal)
Mrs Magda Prail
Mr Garry Thomas

In attendance: - Mr David Williams (Deputy Principal)
Mr Edward Rehm (Director of Finance)
Mrs Debra Baldwin (Director of Personnel)
Mrs Linda Watkins (Clerk to the Corporation)
Ms Maggie Galliers (AoC National Leader of Governance)

The meeting was quorate as fourteen Members were present.

		Action
40.	<p>I. Apologies for Absence Miss Andile Ngulube and Mrs Isobel Rollitt-James.</p> <p>II. Chair's Remarks a. Welcomed and introduced Maggie Galliers who would provide feedback on the Board papers and meeting conduct at the end of the meeting. b. Governors sent their best wishes to Isobel Rollitt-James.</p> <p>III. Declaration of Interest Item 42. Debbie Lambert: employee of University of Worcester. Generic interest - daughter accepted as student at Ludlow College September 2015. Item 44. Val Ainsworth, Liz Patrick, Dr Alan Lavers and Tony Ford: re-appointment as Governors.</p> <p>IV. Process Review Liz Patrick would complete the process review.</p>	
41.	<p>I. Minutes of the Last Meeting The Chair signed the minutes of the Board Meetings held on 16 December 2014 and 10 February 2015 as true records.</p>	

II. Matters arising from the Last Meeting and Action List

The action list had been introduced as a recommendation from Maggie Galliers following observation at the Q&S Committee. This was noted showing that, on this occasion, the list addressed the majority of matters arising.

The Student Governor gave feedback from the NUS Student Governor Conference. She had found this a useful experience which had helped build her confidence. She had participated in a mock board meeting using data from a secondary school.

III. Notes from Governors' Workshop: 16 December 2014

Noted

IV. Action List from Governors' training 10 February 2015

Actions were assigned to the executive to address.

The Board agreed: -

- To approve the minutes

Discussion

42.

Principal's Report

- I. *Principal's Written Report:* Governors noted the report which covered College partnerships, Local Authority and schools, universities, the Chamber/employers, external and internal meetings/events and Ludlow College meetings and events.
 - a. Overall apprenticeship performance was above the national average. Apprenticeship success rates were disappointing in some areas last year showing a slight decline as a result of growth of apprenticeship provision. Governors wanted assurance that strategies had been implemented to monitor and improve apprenticeship success rates. The Principal had introduced regular meetings with assessors to identify and mitigate issues promptly. Ofsted had reviewed apprenticeship provision in March with a positive outcome.
 - b. The Principal had attended a Conservative breakfast which provided an opportunity to meet with business representatives in the county. Bill Wiggin MP had given a presentation on agriculture with some discussion. A Governor asked about progress to appoint a Head of Faculty at Holme Lacy Campus. Following interviews, Alyson Moon had been appointed as Assistant Principal of Faculty of Land Based Studies in addition to Community Studies.
 - c. Leading on from the Governors' Workshop with students, there was discussion about Moodle noting that the College has established a Moodle Group to identify issues and improvements for users. There

is ongoing training for teachers in the effective use of the VLE to benefit students as an interactive teaching resource.

- d. Students at Hereford Campus were extremely complimentary about the high level of student support and personalised experience. A Governor asked if students at Ludlow College received the same levels of support. There were c.400 students based at Ludlow College in a pleasant environment with extremely supportive tutors confirmed by Quality Summits. One of the Student Governors was a student at Ludlow College who freely speaks of her learning experience. The Principal attends several external meetings in Shropshire which are extremely useful and indirectly input into the learner experience.

- II. *Key Performance Indicators:* An explanation was presented about how the Skills Funding Agency require success rates to be reported and the publication of Qualification Success Rates. This showed all courses (long and short) reported by subject sector area. Overall these were positive. Governors challenged management on success rates below the provider group average in ICT, preparation for life and work, and business admin and law. The Deputy Principal explained specific reasons for under-performance and actions taken to mitigate these. There was further discussion about some low success rates in Functional Skills. This included English as a foreign language provided for adults working in Hereford. Management of English and maths programmes had been changed, progress of learners would be closely monitored in an attempt to respond promptly to learner needs and improve results. A suggestion was made to deliver courses in work places, students live in Hereford, but work for different employers. To maximize attendance, lessons are delivered on different days and times during the week. The Equality and Diversity Governor asked about preparation for life and work. Part time funding was dwindling with fewer full time students recruited. Students are not on courses year on year but integrated in the community where possible. LLDD students are integrated into student life at Hereford and Holme Lacy Campuses.

Governors were encouraged by the overall attendance of 92% at this stage in the year.

- III. *Staff Development Presentation: March 2015:* The Principal drew Members' attention to key facts and influences affecting funding in the sector. Skills Funding Agency had published accounts showing 37% of GFE colleges were insolvent in 2013/14. Further funding cuts were anticipated in 2015/16. There had been some growth in HE and apprenticeship numbers which had compensated for funding cuts. 2015/16 applications were outlined. The

College had positive relationships with its partner schools in Herefordshire and Shropshire. Learner feedback confirmed high levels of satisfaction with teaching; this had been reiterated by students at the Governors' Workshop.

A Governor asked how performance of looked after children compared. There was extremely high retention at 97% which was presented at each Quality and Standards Committee.

- IV. *Landex National Specialist College for the Agri-Tech Industries Update*: This would be a partnership between industry and land based institutions providing national, regional and local support at a cost of £2000. Functions of the National College were outlined in the paper. The College had signed up to the National College asking Governors for their retrospective approval which was provided.
- V. *Letter from the FE Commissioner, BIS dated 27 March 2015*: This highlighted some of the early warning signs which were apparent by the FE Commissioner in intervention in colleges. It identified key questions for Governor to ask the Principal and/or senior team.
- VI. Discussion paper Hereford University Centre: The paper was presented for discussion and agreement to progress the proposal. This would be a partnership arrangement building on the existing Associate Partner arrangement with the University of Worcester which had been established for several years. The Hereford University Centre would signpost students to HE options, seeking to raise their aspirations, in addition to community engagement providing lectures, CPD and business events. Costs were noted which would require 50% contribution from each partner and had been discussed with the Director of Finance. Governors discussed the proposal specifically how this would fit with the New University for Herefordshire, support from the Local Authority and if it would be promoted in Ludlow. Governors were supportive of establishing a Hereford University Centre.

The Board agreed: -

- To note the Principal's report
- To approve membership to Landex National Specialist College for the Agri-Tech Industries
- To endorse the proposal to establish Hereford University Centre in partnership with the University of Worcester

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Decisions

43.

Finance

- I. *Sub-contracting 2014/15*: The F&E Committee had discussed the paper. Reasons for sub-contracting were outlined which would address under recruitment of adult learners and additional funding of £200,000 awarded by Skills Funding

Agency at the end of January 2015. The F&E Committee had discussed the paper and recommended that the College sub-contract £350,000 funding this year. This would ensure that the College maintains its funding agreement at the same level next year. A Governor commented that sub-contracting was high risk; this was less than 2% of total turnover. Governors wanted reassurance quality standards would be maintained with regular visits and checks implemented. In addition, these included Quality meetings which were reported to Q&S Committee and the learner voice surveys. The Audit Committee would ensure contractual arrangements were monitored, the Q&S Committee the quality of provision and F&E Committee its financial impact. A Governor asked about the process to select the sub-contracting company noting that the College had used Skills Network in the previous three years who had a proven track record on success rates. The Chair of Audit Committee confirmed that sub-contracting provision was already on the risk register as a low level risk; its risk level would be increased.

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- II. *Letter from Skills Funding Agency dated 4 March 2015:* This was part of annual monitoring process confirming the College's financial health was good and underlying financial health was satisfactory. The data dashboard showed progress over the last three years.

The Board agreed: -

- To approve sub-contracting £350,000 to the Skills Network with robust monitoring to the Board via committees
- To note SFA letter

44.

Governance

- I. *Re-appointment of Governors:* [Governors whose re-appointment was to be discussed left the room] The Chair of Search and Governance Committee reassured Governors that re-appointment had been discussed against criteria of technical skills, contribution and specific roles undertaken on the Board, e.g. Charing or Board Champions. These were also discussed in the light of potential changes to the composition and membership of the Board if the College merged with New College Telford in the near future.
- II. *Public Value Statement:* To approve the PVS which was extracted from the Strategic Plan
- III. *Annual Performance Report 2013/14:* This was a factual report based on College performance
- IV. *Re-appointment of Auditors:* Financial Statements Auditors (PWC) and Internal Auditors (Baker Tilly). The Committee had agreed to tender for auditors next year and investigate options to develop assurance frameworks in 2016/17

The Board agreed: -

- To re-appoint Independent Governors: Val Ainsworth, Liz Patrick and Dr Alan Lavers for further 1-year terms in office and Tony Ford for a 4-year term in office based on

L Watkins

their individual contribution to the College which had been discussed by the Search and Governance Committee

- To approve Public Value Statement
- To approve the Annual Performance Report 2013/14
- To reappoint the Financial Statements Auditors and Internal Auditors

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45. Personnel

Safeguarding policy: The Director of Personnel reminded Governors that this was a revision to the policy. Requirements within the Prevent Duty had been incorporated into this policy.

The Board agreed: -

- To approve the Safeguarding Policy

Information

46. Management Accounts to 31 March 2015: Noted. The Director of Finance presented the accounts and invited questions. In summary:

- I. The College remained on track to make a small operating surplus of £9,000 at the year-end
- II. FE funding assumes sub-contracting £350,000 was approved by the Board.
- III. Tuition fee income is £158,000 below budget which was largely offset by other income to the sum of £107,000.
- IV. The bank balance including KSP Ltd is £2.5M.
- V. Payments for the workshops at Holme Lacy Campus were almost complete.
- VI. Contribution by faculty was noted showing only minor variances to contributions by some faculties
- VII. Financial objectives. These had been exceeded

47. Minutes from Committees: Noted

- I. Finance and Employment Committee: 11 March 2015
- II. Quality and Standards Committee: 11 March 2015
- III. Audit Committee: 23 March 2015
- IV. Search and Governance Committee: 11 March 2015. The Committee Chair drew Governors' attention to the Committee's decision to undertake the self assessment exercise benchmarked with other colleges and 1:1 appraisals conducted by the Chair and Vice Chair in June. The Committee had discussed the draft AoC Code of Governance and would make a recommendation for its adoption at the next Board meeting.

48. Health and Safety Report – noted

49. Staff Report – noted

50. Tuition Fee and Remission Policy 2015/16 – This was approved by the Board with no changes to the previous year's fees

51. Budget timetable and budget parameters - noted

52. Curriculum and quality report - noted

53. Qualification success rate classroom based learning - noted

54. Annual report on teaching and learning - noted

55. Equality and diversity report - noted

56. Safeguarding Report – The Director of Personnel updated Governors on the Prevent agenda placing a duty on colleges. A Prevent Strategy was in place. Further amendments would be presented to the Board in July. The BIS Prevent Coordinator would deliver training for Governors at the next Governors' Workshop. Training

D Baldwin

and awareness sessions were also in place for staff and students. A working group had been established to ensure staff receive regular updates on the Prevent agenda.

57.

58. Risk Register – noted

AoC Voluntary Code of Governance – noted. The Clerk would identify actions to implement the Code for discussion by the Search and Governance Committee and a recommendation at the next Board meeting.

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59.

College events – noted. The Clerk would email Governors requesting availability to ensure attendance by Governors at all events.

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60.

Press coverage – Noted

The Board agreed: -

- To note the above reports which were provided for information

61.

Process Review

Liz Patrick had conducted the process review. All indicators had been achieved during an excellent meeting with detailed discussion on topics.

62.

Date and Time of Next Meeting

Tuesday 14 July 2015 Governors' Workshop at 2.30 pm and Board Meeting at 4.00pm.

63.

Feedback from Maggie Galliers, AoC National Leader of Governance

- Encouraged an action list had been introduced following suggestion at Q&S Committee
- Proficient and highly committed Governors were engaged asking constructive and challenging questions, the executive were complemented on their response to challenge
- Governors and the executive have open and transparent relationships
- Agenda clear with timings and use of colour coding and meeting maintained a good pace
- Meeting benefited from previous workshop with interaction with students. Option to establish a Student Liaison Committee with Governors and students interacting
- Improvements for consideration: -
 - Encourage everyone to contribute
 - Option to introduce a RAG rated Governors' dashboard
 - Standard template front sheet stating purpose and expectation from Governors i.e. for approval/information would add value
 - Executive reports should cover all key issues of item for discussion

The Chair thanked Maggie Galliers for her verbal feedback; a brief report would follow.

Signed as a true record of proceedings

Chair: Date: