

**The College of West Anglia
Minutes of
The Corporation Board Meeting
16 October 2019
8.30 am
Room U120, University Centre, King's Lynn Campus**

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| Present | Sharon Cambridge | Governor (Chair) |
| | Chris Ashman | Governor (Vice Chair) |
| | Andrew Cave | Governor (Vice Chair) |
| | Dave Clark | Governor |
| | Rebecca Hamilton | Governor |
| | Ray Harding | Governor |
| | Scott Leadley | Governor |
| | Alan Measures | Governor |
| | Mollie Pemberton | Governor |
| | Samantha Penn | Governor |
| | Ruby Platt | Governor |
| | David Pomfret | Governor (Principal) |
| | Adam Thompsett | Governor |
| | Gary Webb | Governor |
| Attending | Andrew Gedge | Assistant Principal Quality & Students |
| | Paul Harrison | Vice Principal Corporate Services |
| | Ruth Harrison | Vice Principal Curriculum & Learning |
| | Neil Harries | Head of Finance (part) |
| | Stephen Halls | Clerk to the Corporation |

1 Apologies

Apologies were received from Jyoti Saita and Roderick Watkins. It was noted that Lucy Nethsingha was on special leave. Matt Walsh was absent from the meeting. Ruby Platt would need to leave during the meeting for student commitments.

2 Governor Discussion/Briefings: Contribution Analysis and Cash Flow Forecasting

The Head of Finance gave a presentation to the meeting explaining contribution analysis, how it was calculated and the information it provided to those running a business. The benefits of understanding the contribution ratio were explained, especially when carrying out a detailed analysis by calculating the ratio for each area of the business, such as by faculty and by department.

Ruby Platt left the meeting at 8.40 am

Cash Flow was also explained, again with the Head of Finance outlining how it was calculated and the information it provided to finance managers. The need to monitor cashflow was emphasised to ensure that cash levels remained sufficient to cover obligations and for the college to be able to make payments when they became due.

The Principal advised the meeting that two colleges had recently become insolvent and that two other colleges were struggling to control their cashflows. Governors noted that contribution analysis helped to identify areas that were generating cash for the college and

other areas that made little profit. A reporting system that could accurately calculate contribution by course level would be the ideal.

Neil Harries left the meeting at 8.55 am

3 Declarations of Interests

Scott Leadley declared an interest in Item 6.ii and Ray Harding declared an interest in Item 8.iv. Both undertook to withdraw from the meeting at the appropriate time.

4 Minutes of previous meeting – 3 July 2019

The Minutes of the meeting of 3 July 2019 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

5 Matters Arising

The progress against the outstanding matters from previous meetings were summarised in the report for item 5. These were accepted by the Board and there were no questions raised. The Clerk referred to item 7 on 22/5/19 regarding the listing of training opportunities for governors. The Clerk explained that it had proved difficult to compile an up-to-date listing of all available courses as these were constantly being amended and added to by the various providers. It was agreed that the Clerk would continue to issue information of each training opportunity direct to governors as and when received.

6 Governance Items:

- i. Appointment of New Governors – The Clerk advised that the Search & Governance Committee met on 9 October 2019 and considered applications from Ms Gill Rejzl and Dr. Lee Smith. The recommendation from the committee to the Board was that both applicants be appointed, with Gill Rejzl to serve on the Audit Committee and Lee Smith to serve on the Performance Review & Quality Committee.

It was proposed by Andrew Cave and seconded by Sam Penn that Gill Rejzl and Lee Smith be appointed to the Board, both to serve for 4 years. This was agreed.

Scott Leadley left the meeting at 8.56 am (declared interest)

- ii. Re-appointment of Governors - The Clerk advised that the Search & Governance Committee met on 9 October 2019 and considered the re-appointment of Scott Leadley. The Chair added that the committee had thoroughly discussed Mr. Leadley's re-appointment, noting that this would be his third term of office as a staff governor. The committee had considered that Mr. Leadley made a value contribution to the Board, both at Corporation level and also committee level, where Mr. Leadley served as Vice Chair of the Performance Review & Quality Committee and was recommending to the Board that he be re-appointed.

It was proposed by Samantha Penn and seconded by Chris Ashman that Scott Leadley be re-appointed to the Board for a period of 4 years. This was agreed.

Scott Leadley re-joined the meeting at 8.57 am

- iii. Governor Attendance - The Clerk highlighted that in 2018/19 governors achieved an average overall attendance level of 88% (84% in 2017/18) and an average Board attendance level of 76% (82% in 2017/18). The Chair thanked governors for the very positive support given at committee meetings, but asked governors to try and improve their attendance at Board meetings which had dropped last year, noting that at the May

2019 and July 2019 meetings only 9 governors were present. The Chair thanked governors for their support of other events, such as the recent Graduation Ceremony, Learning Walks and Self-Assessment Review meetings. The Principal added his thanks to those who had supported the Self-Assessment Review meetings.

- iv. Association of Colleges' Senior Post Holder Remuneration Code - The Clerk advised that the Search & Governance Committee met on 9 October 2019 and considered the adoption of the AoCs' Senior Post Holder Remuneration Code, necessary in order to comply with the AoCs' Code of Good Governance in England. The committee was recommending to the Board that the Remuneration Code be adopted.

It was proposed by the Chair and seconded by Andrew Cave that the Senior Post Holder Remuneration Code be adopted. This was agreed.

- v. Remuneration – Annual Report 2018/19 – the Clerk referred the Board to the Remuneration Annual Report at Appendix 4. The Chair gave her thanks to the Clerk for preparing the report on behalf of the Remuneration Committee.

The annual report was noted.

- vi. Governor Learning Walks – Governors reported on the recent Learning Walks they had undertaken:
 - i. Adam Thompsett – Electrical
 - ii. Andrew Cave – Hospitality
 - iii. Ray Harding – Wisbech Campus
 - iv. Sam Penn – Hair & Beauty
 - v. Chris Ashman – English, Health & Social Care, Media (noting that A Level geography had also been arranged but was cancelled due to sickness)
 - vi. Rebecca Hamilton – Art & Design
 - vii. Gary Webb – Sports Campus
 - viii. Dave Clark – Uniform Services, Childcare and Foundation Studies
 - ix. Alan Measures – Childcare
 - x. Sharon Cambridge – Vehicle Maintenance, Carpentry (including Foundation Studies students)

The Principal thanked governors for taking part in the Learning Walks. The feedback received had been positive. The improved quality of teaching at the start of the academic year had been noted.

- vii. Link Governor Feedback – Andrew Cave advised that for Maths & English the recent performance would be covered in Item 14 on the agenda. Chris Ashman reported that for A levels the temporary co-ordinator covering maternity leave was managing her duties and exuded energy in the role.

The updates were noted.

7 Committee Chairs' Briefing Items:

- Employment Policy Committee – The latest curriculum impact report had been reviewed, noting the staffing issues being experienced across the teaching departments and how the HR department had taken action to work with managers whose departments were in Support to Improve. The committee had discussed the very comprehensive Annual Staff Development Review for 2018/19 which evaluated the training undertaken in the previous year and looked ahead to the training priorities required for the new academic year.

- PR&Q – The committee had reviewed its areas of focus and would now look to include departments in Support to Improve, quality matters, tutorials and work placements. The committee was pleased with the reporting from Laura Holland (Head of Maths & English) and Vicky Mann (Work Based Learning/Apprentices). The committee had reviewed in detail the Quality Improvement Plan and Key Performance Indicators. The committee held a focus group session with 15 students at the end of its last meeting, with coffee, pastries and conversation. The discussions were positive and the students felt valued. The committee chair thanked those governors who had been involved with the self-assessment review meetings, noting that the final reviews would take place on 4 & 5 November 2019.
- Search and Governance – The Chair noted briefly again the comments made earlier regarding governors’ attendance at meetings, which had been reviewed by the Search & Governance Committee at its last meeting.

The updates were noted.

8 Principal’s Strategy Report

The Principal asked if governors had any questions or comments on the first three items of his report (School of Nursing, Combined Authority Capital Bid, CITB update) as the fourth item, Gaywood Fields, was restricted and would be dealt with separately.

The Chair commented that the proposal for the development of the School of Nursing with the Queen Elizabeth Hospital would be a very exciting opportunity for the college.

Governors felt that the future of the CITB at Bircham Newton was a concern for the area. The Principal noted that the current CITB operation ran at a loss and therefore it was not possible to consider taking this over and adding further risk to the college’s finances. The Principal would remain in contact with the CITB, the Local Enterprise Partnership and the Borough Council and would involve himself in discussions regarding the future of the site at Bircham Newton. Governors commented that the current location of the site was not ideal. The Principal reminded governors that the CITB had other training centres around the UK. The possible risk of an alternative provider taking over the centre and then introducing a similar curriculum offer to that offered by the college was discussed.

Ray Harding left the meeting at 9.32 am (declared interest)

The next item within the Principal’s report was deemed “Confidential – Restricted.”

Ruby Platt re-joined the meeting at 9.40 am

Ray Harding re-joined the meeting at 10.11 am

The Chair called for a short break in the meeting at 10.11 am

Ruby Platt left the meeting at 10.12 am

The meeting re-commenced at 10.15 am

9 Review of Strategic Targets Outturn 2018-19

Governors noted the final performance dashboard for 2018/19. Targets were coded as having been either “green - achieved” or “red - not achieved.”

The Chair noted item 2.5 regarding the embedding of the Gatsby measures where the commentary in the report was incomplete. The Assistant Principal Quality & Students explained that the application for the kite mark award would be made by the college in January/February 2020.

Governors asked if the final outcomes were reported to staff. The Clerk advised that the dashboard was available for staff to view on the college's intranet.

The report was noted.

10 Preliminary Financial Results 2018/19

The Vice Principal Corporate Services reported that the preliminary results were subject to change following the final reconciliation of ESFA funding and the financial audit by KPMG. The preliminary results had been reviewed by the Finance & General Purposes Committee at its meeting on 2 October 2019. The bottom line had since improved by £56k due to some late changes being made relating to the Adult Education Budget and currently stood at a deficit position of £2.147m. The major movements to the expected reforecast position were listed in the summary table at paragraph 3 in the report. The financial health rating achieved was "Requires Improvement" with a score of 130 points, some 20 points above the ESFA's "Inadequate" banding. The final cash position was a balance of £4.9m. The performance against the financial strategic targets was noted in paragraph 22. Of particular note, staff costs as a percentage of income had increased from 67% in the previous year to 74% for 2018/19, caused by a reduction in income and increased staff costs, particular with regard to agency and other recruitment incentives for teaching staff in the Technology faculty.

With regard to the government's recent announcement of increased funding to the FE sector, the Chair asked what approach the management was taking on this. The Principal reported that the details for the increased funding, intended to take effect from 2020/21 were still to be published. This had been discussed by the senior management team but as yet no adjustments had been made to the college's medium term financial plan. The increased funding, although publicised, had yet to be guaranteed. The finance team would be remodelling the medium term financial plan in due course for the Finance & General Purposes Committee to review the possible implications.

Governors noted the overall contribution rate achieved for the year of 36.4% and asked if this benchmarked well with the sector. The Vice Principal Corporate Services advised that the overall target for the college was set at 50%. The Principal noted that there were other colleges with a lower contribution rate. The Principal continued that CWA's performance needed to be improved and that the results from the planned benchmarking exercise being carried out by Tribal Consulting during the current term would be invaluable, once received.

The report was noted.

11 Funding Outturn 2018/19 and Indicative Numbers 2019/20

The Vice Principal Corporate Services reported that the latest student numbers for the autumn term were higher than anticipated and that management was cautiously optimistic at what would be the final figure for recruitment. The fenland transport subsidy, launched during the summer months to support students travelling to the Wisbech campus was considered to have had a positive impact on retaining students and encouraging new students to the campus who may have enrolled elsewhere for their studies. Governors asked if the increased students could be fully attributed to the transport subsidy. The Principal advised that, if possible, a report would be produced to identify the increased students and their reasons for choosing the college, to be presented to governors in due course.

ACTION-PRINCIPAL

The Principal reminded governors that the transport subsidy was a cost to the college, offset by the additional income received in respect of increased student funding (lagged).

The report was noted.

12 Appointment of Internal Auditors

From the report, the Clerk summarised that following a tender exercise and an interview panel the preferred supplier was Scrutton Bland. The Clerk confirmed that members of the Audit Committee had indicated their agreement for this appointment.

It was proposed by Andrew Cave and seconded by Rebecca Hamilton that Scrutton Bland be appointed Internal Auditors for the college for a period of three years. This was agreed.

13 Applewood Nursery – Update Report

The Vice Principal Curriculum & Learning reported that advisers from Norfolk County Council had visited the nursery on Monday (14 October 2019). Feedback from the Early Years' Adviser suggested that improvements were continuing. A further visit would take place after the October half-term holiday. The new manager would commence on 25 November 2019. The additional effort put in by Sue Moore, Head of Faculty to make the required changes was noted.

The Chair asked when the next inspection would likely take place. The Vice Principal Curriculum & Learning advised that there was no indication of exactly when this would occur, but it was expected anytime from now onward, noting that only one day's notice would be given by the inspectors. Staff were confident about the needs of their children.

The report was noted.

14 Current Performance Data and KPIs

The Assistant Principal Quality & Students circulated an updated CWA Headline Results summary to the one supplied in the report at Appendix 1.

The Assistant Principal reported that it was anticipated that the Individualised Learner Record (ILR) return would be completed by the end of the current week. The overall emerging achievement rate was 84.2%. The rate for 16-18 year olds was noted as being 80.9%. For core CWA 19+ students the rate was 82%, up on the previous year. The number of 19+ students studying with partners had increased from 1,578 in 2017/18 to 3,199 in 2018/19.

Governors noted that the number of qualifications had reached 9,101, up from 7,453 on the previous year. The Assistant Principal responded that the results included those qualifications obtained through short distance learning courses, adding that generally students were achieving more. The Principal commented that performance had improved by 9% over the last three years and gave his thanks to the Assistant Principal for his work in supporting the improvements and compiling the performance reports.

The report was noted.

15 Quality Improvement Plan 2018/19 – Year End Review

The Assistant Principal Quality & Students noted that the report detailed the last review of the improvement plan before it would be updated for 2019/20 using information obtained from the new round of self-assessment reviews.

The Chair commented on the teaching day that took place on 9 July 2019 and allowed for the consideration, discussion and challenge on new teaching techniques.

The report was noted.

16 CWA Quality Strategy 2019/20

The Chair confirmed with the Chair of the Performance Review & Quality Committee that the quality strategy had been reviewed by the committee at its last meeting on 25 September 2019. There were no questions or comments raised regarding the proposed strategy.

It was proposed by Chris Ashman and seconded by Scott Leadley to approve the Quality Strategy for 2019/20. This was agreed.

17 Learning Strategy 2019/20

The Learning Strategy had been reviewed by the Performance Review & Quality Committee at its last meeting on 25 September 2019. The Chair of the committee advised that the strategy would be thoroughly reviewed throughout the year in preparation for a new strategy for 2020/21.

It was proposed by Sam Penn and seconded by Chris Ashman to approve the Learning Strategy for 2019/20. This was agreed.

18 Update from the Safeguarding Governor (Sharon Cambridge)

The Chair reported that as well as receiving minutes and correspondence from the Safeguarding Committee she had attended two meetings in the past year. One meeting had included a presentation on Right-wing and Extreme Right-wing groups and their activities. Measures such as the college's internet system for filtering content viewed by students was noted. The student support adviser post at the Cambridge Campus was vacant, although the recruitment to this post was taking place; support from advisers at the King's Lynn campus was being provided in the interim. The mental health practitioner had had a positive impact on the welfare of students. The Chair was confident that good systems were in place at the college to support and protect the students. It was noted however, that sometimes when dealing with external agencies, such as for referrals, there was a delay due to the workload of those agencies.

The update was noted.

19 Hearing the Student Voice 2018/19

The Assistant Principal Quality & Students highlighted from the National Students Survey that for the question "I would recommend the course to a future student who is interested" the college scored 90% against a national average of 82%. The Chair accepted that this was a positive score, but that it had dipped slightly from the 93% received by the college in the previous year.

The Assistant Principal noted that a good number of responses had been received. An update to the report would be provided to the Board in December 2019. **ACTION-APQS**

20 Student Governor Report

Mollie Pemberton highlighted World Mental Health Day taking place on 10 October 2019 including the Twitter competition to compile a CWA playlist of positive songs. It was noted that mental health issues were a delicate matter for most students. The "Love Your College" campaign was noted along with the events taking place at CWA. Feedback from the Questions of the Week were noted. The Principal gave his thanks to the students for supporting the "Love Your College" campaign. The Chair asked about previous concerns

raised by student governors regarding student behaviour across the campuses. The Vice Principal Curriculum & Learning advised that when issues were reported these were being followed up.

The report was noted.

21 Review of the Risk Register

The Vice Principal Corporate Services advised that all risks previously allocated to the Director of Employer Engagement had been re-allocated to other managers. As agreed previously, the risk relating to increased regulatory focus on sub-contracting (2018-13) had not been removed from the register.

Following discussions at the Performance Review & Quality Committee it had been agreed to add a new risk to the register, that of the increasing numbers of HE student complaints, which could lead to financial penalties, reputational damage and the increased use of staff time in dealing with the complaints (2019-1). Governors asked about the number of complaints received. The Principal responded that 2 complaints had been received in the last academic year, both of which went for external consideration and both were not upheld. The Principal added that there was a growing trend in the number of complaints being raised by students, possibly encouraged by the award of financial compensation for the student should a complaint be upheld.

The report was noted.

22 CWA Public Value Statement - Update

The Clerk reported that the Public Value Statement had been reviewed and updated to reflect the minor changes to the Strategic Plan 2019/20.

It was proposed by Rebecca Hamilton and seconded by Chris Ashman to approve the Public Value Statement. This was agreed.

23 Any Other Business

- i. Mr. Measures raised the issue of mental health and the possible link to the number of withdrawals. The Chair noted that a number of staff were trained in providing mental health first aid;
- ii. Scott Leadley presented the new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion sports kit that had been introduced, highlighting to college students (and visiting teams) that the college fully supported EDI issues. The college had appeared in a recent AoC article regarding its support of EDI. The Chair mentioned that there was a link governor post specifically for EDI that was currently vacant.
- iii. Mr. Ashman reported how valuable he had found the self-assessment reviews to be and encouraged others to attend future sessions if they had not already done so (4 & 5 November 2019).
- iv. The Assistant Principal Quality & Students reported that the college had recently launched its new website. An Open Evening was taking place that evening (16 October 2019) with 1,100 booked to attend (prospective students with family members), with a view to commencing studies at the college in September 2020.
- v. The Chair reminded governors of the training morning taking place on Wednesday 30 October 2019 with external speakers from the Association of Colleges and asked for a full attendance.

24 Date and time of next meeting

Wednesday, 11 December 2019 at 8.30 am, King's Lynn Campus.

The meeting closed at 10.56 am