

**MOULTON COLLEGE**  
**CORPORATION BOARD**

**Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 26<sup>th</sup> October 2017**

- Present:** Mr R Thompson (in the Chair), Mr A Clarkson, Mrs S Davies, Mr R O'Driscoll, Mr L Howarth, Mrs L Knapp, Mr T Neville, Mr R Sadler, Mr S Spry and Mr M Thomson
- In attendance:** Miss A S Bruce, Mr G Davies, Mrs S Field, Mrs G M Hulley and Mr C Jackson

**PART 1**

**SECTION A – ROUTINE AND STANDING ITEMS**

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- 16/560 Apologies for absence (Agenda item 1)**  
Apologies for absence were received from Mrs K Delamain-Blunt, Mr S Gordon and Mr A Thomson. Alicia Bruce, the new Chief Finance Officer was welcomed to the meeting.
- 16/561 Declarations of interest (Agenda item 2)**  
Mr L Howarth declared an interest in agenda items 6, 14, 15 and 22. Mr T Neville declared an interest in agenda items 6, 13 and 14.
- 16/562 Minutes of the last meeting (Agenda item 3, Paper A)**  
The minutes of the last meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2017 which had been previously circulated, were approved as a true and correct record.
- 16/563 Actions outstanding (Agenda item 4, Paper B)**  
**16/417, Health and Safety Report**  
Clarification had been sought about the dates used for comparison purposes. It was confirmed that the information presented for summer 2017 was for the same period in the previous year, ie summer 2016.

All other actions were either on the agenda for discussion in the meeting or progressing as planned and not due for reporting until later in the year.

**SECTION B – GOVERNANCE (Appointment)**

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- 16/564 Governor appointment (Agenda item 5, Paper C)**  
The appointment of Mr Ian James was recommended by the Search and Governance Committee using a written resolution. Ian James had been interviewed by the Principal and Chair. A written resolution to appoint Ian James had been unanimously approved by the Search and Governance Committee. His appointment was proposed by Lucille Knapp and seconded by Terry Neville *and approved unanimously*.

In March 2017, the Corporation had approved a leave of absence for the Vice Chair of Corporation. Her second term of office was due for re-election. The Chair had been in contact with the Vice Chair who had confirmed that it was likely that any return to the Board would not be until early 2019. The Board was unanimous in acknowledging the invaluable contribution the Vice Chair had made during her first term of office. Once the leave of absence was completed, the governor would be welcome to return as a co-opted member of a committee. In the event of a vacancy becoming available, the governor

could be re-elected to the Board. **(Action 67 – Chair)**. Following discussion, *it was agreed not to recommend a second term of office at this time.*

## **SECTION C – PRINCIPAL AND SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM (SLT) UPDATE**

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16/565

**Principal and SLT update:**

### **a) Recruitment 2017-18**

The latest figures were outlined and discussed. For full-time, further education (FE), student numbers were slightly below the funding target. Details of plans that had been put in place to offset any potential reduction were outlined and discussed. There was a very positive position to report for 16-18 Apprenticeships. For Higher Education (HE), the College had exceeded the number of students recruited compared to the original budget forecast. It was likely that this figure would increase. Following discussion, *the report was received.*

### **b) Student recruitment targets 2018-19**

As the main 2016-17 recruitment round had only just finished this week, the team was in the process of finalising targets for the next academic year. These would be shared with the Board at its next meeting on the 30<sup>th</sup> November 2017 **(Action 68 - Principal)**. Targets would be based on an internal stretch target which would generally be higher than any externally set target. The stretch target would also be compared to what had been achieved in 2016-17. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

### **c) College achievement rate targets 2017-18**

The Director of Quality Improvement and Student Support outlined the overall College curriculum achievement rate targets. Attendance was set at 90% and Retention 92%. In FE, when setting the targets, the outturn from 2016-17 had been considered together with the most recent published national rates for 2015-16. The 2016-17 national rate information for vocational qualifications would not be available until early 2018. All the proposed targets exceed national rates and included stretch on the previous year. A strong focus would continue to be placed on English and mathematics as this was such a high priority area. Details of proposed staffing changes to strengthen this area further were outlined. In Apprenticeships, the target for overall achievement was 75% and for timely achievement, 65%. The overall achievement rate targets for HE were outlined and discussed. There were 3 targets. A retention target of 85% from year 1 to year 2. A continuation target of 90% for year 2 to year 3 and a success target of 80%. The latter was based on the number of students achieving their qualification compared to the original number of starts.

Members sought clarification about the use of any external benchmarks when devising the proposed internal targets. Particular emphasis was placed upon the College's position in relation to Functional Skills which was extremely positive and GCSE English and mathematics. A range of actions had been implemented during the previous year to improve learner outcomes. Following discussion, *it was agreed to circulate a copy of the presentation (Action 69 – Clerk); and, the report was received.*

## **SECTION D – TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT**

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16/566

**Ofsted – Preparing for Inspection (Agenda item 7)**

The Board received a presentation on the theme, 'Preparing for Inspection.' A copy of the 'Leadership and Management' criteria from the Common Inspection Framework (CIF, September 2017) was circulated to all Members.

The presentation provided Members with a summary of the areas of judgement and types of provision that would form the basis of an inspection. It also highlighted the different areas of responsibility for governors. The importance of evidencing impact was discussed. The Governor Link Scheme would provide many opportunities to demonstrate this. A further meeting with the Ofsted HMI (Her Majesty's Inspector) was planned for mid-November as part of a support and challenge visit. Outcomes from this visit would be confirmed in a letter to the College. This would be circulated to the Board. **(Action 70 – Principal)**. Following discussion, *the report was noted*.

**16/567**

**Curriculum Strategy (Agenda item 8, Paper D)**

The report was outlined and discussed. The curriculum offer was reviewed in autumn each year as part of the annual planning cycle. The curriculum offer had evolved and developed in response to changes in government policies relating to education, economy and society. It had been produced in consultation with external partners, employers and stakeholders. Analysis of LMI (Local Management Information) data produced by other organisations, for example, SEMLEP (South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership), information obtained from attending industry working groups or less formal groups had been used to ensure it was fit for purpose. In a discussion about responsibilities, it was agreed the Corporation's responsibilities were not fully reflected. Following discussion, *it was agreed to (a) update the responsibilities in line with expectations of the Corporation; (b) that the plan should be dated; (c) the references to Food and Drink Manufacturing should be more overt; (d) this was one of three strategies presented at the meeting which in future should be presented as plans; and, the report was noted*. **(Actions 71 (a) to (d) – Director of FEC&SE)**

**16/568**

**Early withdrawals (Agenda item 9, Paper E)**

The Director of FE Curriculum and Student Engagement highlighted that there had been an overall reduction in early withdrawals in the first 6 weeks of term. This was a 0.9% reduction compared to the previous year. This was a very positive start to the year. Every programme area had seen an improvement apart from one. There had been a significant improvement in performance in Construction with early withdrawals of 1.1% compared to 4.1% in the previous year. Every effort was being made to ensure the student experience was of the highest quality. It was also important to ensure that the structure of support, target monitoring and management of assessment was effective to ensure that students were kept on track and engaged in their studies and to keep withdrawals low as the year progresses. Further detail was provided about the actions that were being taken to prevent students leaving their course. Following discussion, *the report was noted*.

**16/569**

**Teaching staff utilisation (Agenda item 10, Paper F)**

This report was outlined and discussed. It provided the Board with details of contracted teaching staff utilisation across all programme areas for the academic year 2017-18. The target set for areas was 95%. Four programme areas were above the utilisation target. One narrowly missed the target by 0.6% and another was within 1.7% of reaching the target. Two areas were identified as below 90% and therefore significantly below other areas. Following discussion, *the report was noted*.

**16/570**

**Exam re-sits: Cost implications (Agenda item 11, Paper G)**

The report was outlined and discussed. It had been prepared following a Corporation Board meeting in April 2017 when a number of questions were

raised about the potential impact of exam re-sits upon students and College resources. The report confirmed there was an increase of circa £12k. This was likely to rise again in 2018-19 when Land Based and Equine would move to technical qualifications. The Chair extended his thanks to the author for the informative report. Following discussion, *the report was noted*.

- 16/571 Programme area report: Land Based (Agenda item 12, Paper H)**  
The report was outlined and discussed. It provided a comprehensive overview of performance for the previous and current academic year. The achievement rate in land based in 2016-17 was above the national rate. This was an improvement on the previous year. The first round of observations had been completed. A broad range of enrichment activities for land based students was outlined. This included extensive development of employability skills through the College commercial enterprise facilities. Members were informed of the current marketing opportunities that were used to promote this programme area. Following discussion, *it was agreed that: (a) future reports should include an executive summary of no more than 2 pages of A4; (b) details of student satisfaction should be included; (c) consideration in the future should be given to inviting the programme leader to present the respective report to the Board (Actions 72 [a] to [c] – Director of FEC&SE); and, the report was received*

Mrs S Field and Mr C Jackson left the meeting.

## **SECTION E – FINANCE**

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- 16/572 Finance Scrutiny Panel**  
Members were asked to note the minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2017.
- 16/573 Management Accounts**
- a) Year-end accounts as at 31<sup>st</sup> July 2017**  
Members were informed that the auditors had completed their external audit of the financial statements. There were a small number of items of evidence to provide. The statutory accounts would be presented to the next Corporation Board meeting in November 2017. The Board had previously seen the July 2017 management accounts. Although it was not expected that the final position would change, one or two adjustments that were needed, were likely to favour the College. Members received confirmation of a series of actions that would be implemented during the academic year to ensure that this work on the year-end accounts would be completed earlier. Following discussion, *the verbal report was received*.
- b) September 2017**  
The Chief Finance Officer provided a high level update on work completed to date with the September 2017 management accounts. A number of improvements were outlined and discussed. These included changes to financial forecasting and further staff training. Members received an assurance that accounts for the first quarter (Period 3) would be presented at the next meeting in November 2017. Following discussion, *the report was noted*.

## **SECTION E – STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENTS**

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- 16/574 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) 2016-17 (Agenda item 15, Paper J)**  
Members received the final report on the KPIs for the last academic year. Of the 38 KPIs that had been approved by the Board, 4 could not be measured

as they rely on external survey data which was currently unavailable or, in the case of the staff survey, had been deferred. Of the remaining 34 KPIs that could be measured, 74% were either Green or Amber. The report included a commentary for each of the outcomes. The Principal invited feedback from the Board on any improvements to the way in which KPIs are reported in 2017-18 to inform current developments. In a discussion around the findings in the report, a request was made to include details of any mitigating actions in future reports against each Amber and Red item. **(Action 73 – Principal)** Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

**16/575**

**Saudi Arabia (Agenda item 16, Paper K)**

The report was outlined and discussed. The Principal had attended a TOP (The Oxford Partnership) Board meeting in late September 2017. TOP continued to make good progress in establishing the Colleges of Excellence in the Northern Territories and Madinah. All TOP colleges were rated good based on the CoE external 'Institutional Review' assessment process of the quality outcomes. This placed all TOP Colleges in the upper decile of colleges in the CoE programme. Student recruitment across all 4 colleges stands at 3,104 which exceeded the planned Semester 1 target by 12.3%. Although the financial situation was still challenging, it had stabilised with a positive variance for the financial year 2016. Members agreed that this was a positive report and that the next 18-24 months would be crucial to the future of the contract. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

**16/576**

**Solar Panel Partnership (Agenda item 17)**

Since the last meeting of the Corporation Board in September 2017, Members had been asked to supply details of any questions they wished to raise about the proposed solar power partnership. Responses to the questions from the potential partner had now been received and circulated to the Corporation. Details of a draft lease and power purchase agreements were also outlined and discussed. Since the last meeting, discussions had taken place with two colleges who had entered into a similar solar power partnership arrangement. Their feedback was very positive with energy savings already being realised. The proposed partnership was not dissimilar to the agreed arrangements with the veterinary practice and the hydroponics facility. The College would be renting out space. The Board highlighted the positive message this would have on the College's commitment to the environment. At the meeting of the Finance Scrutiny Panel earlier in the week, the proposal had been considered in great detail. Members had concluded that a number of additional actions were required. Permission from the bank should be sought. **(Action 74 [a] - CFO)** There was also a need for the partner to review the type of solar panels used on the Chris Moody Centre; a solar slate panel would be preferred. **(Action 74 [b] - Principal)** A due diligence check of the agency involved should be completed **(Action 74 [c] - CFO)**. Following discussion, *it was agreed that on the proviso that: Actions (74 [a] to 74 [c] should be completed with a satisfactory outcome; the lease and power purchase agreements would be scrutinised externally by the College legal team (Action 75 - CFO); that the Corporation Board would approve in principle the solar power partnership arrangement.*

**16/577**

**Growth opportunities (Agenda item 18)**

The College had entered into an arrangement being led by LANDEX to set up an independent end-point assessment (EPA) organisation. The remit for this organisation would be to identify end-point assessment arrangements for the land based sector. This would be a self-financing arrangement. This

arrangement was of strategic national importance as there were potentially insufficient assessors. This arrangement would ensure students are able to get to the end of their Apprenticeship programme. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

- 16/578 Property Strategy (Agenda item 19, Paper L)**  
The report was outlined and discussed. It had been updated to reflect feedback on space utilisation discussed at the previous Corporation Board meeting. Two additional points were raised by the Board. Following discussion it was agreed that: *(a) the latest site images should be used; (b) in 12.3, reference should be made to 'any profit from asset disposals should be used to reduce existing loans used for investment in the Estate' (Action 75 [a] to [b] – Deputy Principal); and, the Property Strategy was approved by the Board.*
- 16/579 Marketing and Communication Strategy (Agenda item 20, Paper M)**  
The report was reviewed on an annual basis. Feedback from a recent link governor visit was also included. In addition to student numbers being used to measure success, the Board was informed of other local measures that were being introduced. Responsibilities for marketing at each level of the organisation were detailed in the report. Members welcomed an opportunity to provide feedback on the report. There was a recommendation to create a task and finish group for this area of work. This group could meet once a year and would provide an opportunity to draw on the expertise of existing governors and help to inform future marketing plans. Following discussion, it was agreed that: *(a) a task and finish group should be formed that would be comprised of both relevant College staff and governors with a particular skill or interest in marketing and communication; (b) review the resource requirements to deliver the plan and revise the plan prior to Board approval; (c) ensure that the plan clearly states what was planned and how this would be achieved (Action 76 [a] to [c] – Deputy Principal).*

## **SECTION F - RESOURCES**

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- 16/580 Current developments (Agenda item 21)**  
**a) Food and Drink Innovation Centre (Paper N)**  
The contractors had now started on site. A financial report had been produced. This would be updated on a regular basis and presented to future meetings. Tenders had been received by the procurement agency for the fixed equipment. A recommendation would be brought to the next Board meeting for approval. **(Action 77 – Deputy Principal)**. Work had also commenced on marketing the course programmes. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*
- b) H20ganics**  
There was no further information on progress with the legal agreement. A planning application had been submitted. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*
- 16/581 Commercial enterprise report: Garden Centre (Agenda item 22, Paper O)**  
The report was outlined and discussed. A positive financial outcome was expected in 2018. Further work was required across all garden centre activities to achieve a surplus. An employability grade was given to students on completion of sessions. The grade profile was currently excellent with 96% at Distinction or Merit level. Comments from student feedback sheets showed 86% of responses were good or excellent. Following discussion, it was

agreed to: (a) complete a price comparison exercise of products sold in the garden centre; (b) ensure staff and students were aware of any available discounts via Moodle (**Action 78 – Assistant Director Commercial Enterprises**); and, *the report was noted*.

## **SECTION G - GOVERNANCE**

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- 16/582 Appointment to Committees (Agenda item 23, Paper P)**  
During 2016-17, a number of vacancies had arisen on various committees. In addition, there had been a recommendation to review the membership of the Finance Scrutiny Panel and Audit Committee. This had been considered at the Search and Governance Committee at its meeting in September 2017. It was proposed that an existing member of the Board would join the Remuneration Committee. The proposal also included a recommendation by the Search and Governance Committee for a new external governor and the recently appointed student governor to join the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee. A second new external governor would join the Audit Committee. One vacancy remained on the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee. Following discussion, *the appointments listed in the paper were approved*.
- 16/583 Board Key Performance Indicators (Agenda item 23, Paper Q)**  
The report for 2016-17 was outlined and discussed. Fourteen of the 19 indicators had been fully achieved. It was proposed to set the same targets for 2017-18. Following discussion, *the report was noted and the recommendation from the Search and Governance Committee to set the same targets for 2017-18 was approved*.
- 16/584 Governor Development Plan 2017-20 (Agenda item 24, Paper R)**  
Since the last meeting, the 3-year governor development plan (GDP) had been updated to take into account feedback from the group activity. This related to additional evidence that would demonstrate evidence of impact. The 3-year GDP now included draft RAG (Red, Amber, Green) ratings. In a discussion about further examples of evidence of impact, it was proposed that the FE Commissioner's recent report should be added as an example of evidence. Where the RAG ratings were concerned, Members agreed these reflected the current situation. As the 3-year GDP would be monitored at each meeting of the Search and Governance Committee, with further examples of impact gathered throughout the year, the RAG ratings should improve. A final column should be added to the table to show agreed targets. (**Action 79 – Clerk**) Following discussion, *the report was noted*.

## **SECTION H – OTHER MATTERS**

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- 16/585 Date of next meeting**  
Thursday, 30<sup>th</sup> November 2017
- 16/586 Any other business**
- a) Financial Health:**  
The College had now received confirmation from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) that the College had returned to a financial health rating of 'Satisfactory'.
- b) Staffing:**  
Members were informed that Carrie Ryan had sadly passed away having lost her courageous battle with cancer. Details of her funeral

arrangements would be circulated once they were known. Members asked for condolences to be sent to Carrie's family on behalf of the Board.

Mr L Howarth and Mr S Spry left the meeting