

## MOULTON COLLEGE

### Minutes of the meeting of the Corporation held on Thursday, 24<sup>th</sup> March 2016

**Present:** Mr R Thompson (Chair), Mr S Davies, Mr L Howarth, Mrs J Morris, Mr K Moulton, Mrs K Mackaness, Mr T Neville, Mr R O'Driscoll, Mrs E Olson-Williams, Mr R Sadler, Mr R Sanders, Mr M Seymour, Mr A Thomson, Mr M Thomson and Mr M Wakeford

**In attendance:** Mr G Davies, Mrs S Field, Mrs G M Hulley, Mr J Mair and Mrs C Ryan

#### Part 1

#### **SECTION A – ROUTINE AND STANDING ITEMS**

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**16/73 Apologies for absence (Agenda item 1)**

Apologies were received from Mrs S Wilkes

**16/74 Declarations of interest (Agenda item 2)**

Mr Howarth declared an interest in agenda items 10, 14 and 19. Mr Neville declared an interest in agenda items 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 13 and 14. There were no other declarations of interest.

**16/75 Minutes of the last meeting (Agenda item 3, Paper A)**

The minutes of the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2016 were approved as a true and correct record.

**16/76 Actions outstanding from the meeting held on the 25<sup>th</sup> February 2016 (Agenda item 4, Paper B)**

**15/220(c), Moulton College Developments Limited, Action 9**

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services had consulted with VAT advisors. He is now awaiting advice about Corporation tax. A paper would be presented to the Board in May 2016. (Open)

**16/17 (c), Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Higher Education Review, Action 18**

An action plan had been shared with the Quality and Standards Committee on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2016. This would be reported on as part of agenda item 3, Paper C. (Closed)

**16/17 (d), Area-Based Reviews, Action 19**

The Responsive College Unit (RCU) wanted to include latest success rate outcome data from the colleges in the Further Education South East Midlands (FUSE) group which had just been published. Data would be available in April and would form the basis of a review and some of the decisions to be taken. Further guidance was due out this month.

### **16/54, Presentation Day Schedule, Action 20**

Presenters had been identified for two of the four ceremonies. Members were invited to suggest ideas for presenters of two sessions: Wednesday morning, Agriculture and Land-based and Thursday afternoon, Animal Management and Welfare. Suggestions should be sent to Mr S Davies.

## **SECTION B – TEACHING AND LEARNING**

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### **16/77 Quality and Standards Committee, Minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2016 (Agenda item 5, Paper C)**

The minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2016 were presented. Details of the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) action plan were discussed. Learning walks were planned and would be arranged with Mrs S Field, Mrs C Ryan and Mr C Jackson. Members of the Board were also encouraged to take part in learning walks. The Committee was pleased with the improvements in retention and noted the successful use of ProMonitor. Student attendance was highlighted as a challenge. This would be closely monitored by the Committee. Two college position statements had been shared for Apprenticeships and English and maths. These were welcomed as they provided the Committee with the latest information about these areas and the progress being made towards improvement targets. Good improvements were being made. Following discussion, *the minutes were received*.

### **16/78 Higher Education Tuition Fees 2017-18 (Agenda item 6, Paper D)**

The report was outlined and discussed. It had been prepared in preparation for the Office for Fair Standards (OFFA) Access agreement submission due in April 2016. The report included a proposal to reduce the fee for HND programmes. A rationale for changes to the fees was shared with Members. Following discussion, *the Higher Education (HE) Tuition fees were approved*.

### **16/79 Higher Education Teaching and Learning Policy (Agenda item 7, Paper E)**

This policy had been produced in response to an action arising from the QAA review. It was also part of a strategy to improve HE provision. The policy would help drive growth, recognise the need for a contextualised approach and reflected changing standards. The policy was also very much aligned to the Framework for HE Qualifications (FHEQ). The ultimate aim of the policy was to improve the overall student experience for HE. Following discussion, *the policy was approved*.

### **16/80 Student Recruitment 2016-17 (Agenda item 8, Paper F)**

Applications for Further Education (FE) were slightly lower than the same time last year. There had been, however, a significant increase in applications since the last Board meeting. The number of acceptances was also higher than the previous year in terms of the conversion rate. Work was underway to enter internal progressions from Level 2 and Level 3 onto the management system. A number of promotional activities were planned for the rest of the academic year to support recruitment. This included a greater focus on maximising social media channels.

Apprenticeship numbers were still showing an increase compared to the previous year with an improvement of 13%. A particular growth area was 16-18 Apprentices at Intermediate level. Apprentices that had reached their end date were 40% lower than the same time last year.

In HE, numbers were showing a slight increase compared to the previous year. A number of additional HE viewing days were planned over the next couple of months. These were aimed at promoting the HE offer at the College.

The Secretary of State recently announced the Government would pass legislation for all schools to allow colleges in to discuss vocational education and training opportunities, as part of their careers, advice and guidance responsibilities. The Board welcomed a number of ideas which were shared to demonstrate how the College would promote the curriculum offer to schools. The Schools Link Advisor would lead on this accompanied by student ambassadors. Following discussion, *the report was noted*.

**16/81 Student Retention and Attendance trends 2015-16 (Agenda item 9, Paper G)**

In FE, there was a 1% overall increase in retention compared to the previous year. Current FE retention had been compared to figures provided in a sector-wide report that had just been received. Retention was higher for Sport and Construction and slightly lower for Land-based. In HE, there had been a 5% decrease compared to the previous year. This resulted from a change to a more prompt and robust way of managing student withdrawals locally. In Apprenticeships, retention and predicted outcomes were improving. Attendance had stabilised at 87%. Although this was still below College expectations, this was received positively as there was normally a 1% decrease at this time of the year. The Board was informed of plans for developing a learner focused timetable that would meet their needs and enhance the overall student experience. Following discussion, *the report was received*.

**16/82 College Quality Improvement Report – Progress Monitoring (Agenda item 10, Paper H)**

Members received an update on progress with the Quality Improvement report. Good progress had been made with 4 of the 5 themes during the last month. In Priority 2, apprenticeship outcomes were ahead compared to the same time last year. The report included actions for each of the 5 priority areas that would be focused on for the next month. Following discussion, *the report was received*.

**16/83 Investors in Diversity Stage 2: Re-accreditation (Agenda item 11, Paper I)**

The College had successfully been re-accredited for the Investors in Diversity Stage 2 Standard. This followed a visit undertaken in January 2016 and would be valid for two years. The College had received a copy of the report which had been circulated to the Board. A number of recommendations were made as part of the process. Following consideration by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), actions would be taken forward by a nominated lead.

Actions would be completed over a period of several months. Work on some actions had already commenced. Following discussion, *the report was received*.

**16/84 Equality Objectives 2016-2020 (Agenda item 12, Paper J)**

As part of the Equality Act 2010, the College had a specific duty to prepare and publish one or more objectives that can be achieved to progress activity during the next 4 year period in relation to the general equality duty. The proposed range of actions related to students, outcomes and staff. The Board considered and discussed the proposed equality objectives. Members sought confirmation of the actions that would be taken to ensure the objectives would be achieved in the timescale. An action plan would be created and reported to the Board annually. The objectives and plan would also be published on the website. Five equality objectives were approved. Following discussion, *the equality objectives were approved*.

Mrs S Field and Mrs C Ryan left the meeting.

**16/85 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) Position Statement (Agenda item 13, Paper K)**

The position statement provided an update on progress with KPIs as at March 2016. Members were informed of how the RAG ratings had been applied individually to each KPI and to each grouping. Overall, good progress was being made. There were a number of targets that could not be reported on at this stage because they were not available. There were other targets where it was not possible to achieve them, for example, success rates which would not be available until the end of the year. There were two targets which required further discussion about how best to report, for example, lesson observation outcomes. Following discussion, *the report was received*.

## **SECTION C - FINANCE**

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**16/86 Management Accounts February 2016 (Agenda item 14, Paper L)**

The Accounts were discussed. Members were informed that the HE income budget had been revised to reflect expectations. Although the work-based learning was below budget, the CITB income was due in April. Catering and residences were on budget for the month and there were a number of summer bookings. The farm was also on target. In relation to commercial enterprises, apart from two, all other areas were ahead of budget. Members were pleased to hear that the Sports Injury and Rehabilitation Centre was almost at break-even. This would be two years ahead of schedule. There were some variances in relation to teaching costs which had arisen from a major review of payroll coding. It was also expected that teaching costs should reduce after Easter. Following discussion, *the accounts were approved*.

**16/87 Funding report (Agenda item 15, Paper M)**

The report was outlined and discussed. It had been based on the R07 file which had been submitted earlier in the month. There had been very little change since the previous month. Following discussion, *the report was approved*.

**16/88 Education Funding Agency (EFA) and Skills Funding Agency (SFA) Funding Allocations 2016-17 (Agenda item 16, Paper N)**

Members were informed of the intention to share the 2016-17 SFA funding allocation with the Board. However, this was not possible as the funding allocation had only been published that day. Further analysis was needed prior to circulation. The EFA allocation for main programme funding was showing a slight increase after factoring in students from the previous year and the new higher programme weighting factor for Land based. Formula funding protection had reduced compared to the previous year. The allocation did not include Care Standards funding which was likely to be confirmed at a later date. Any reduction in funding for FE students would be factored in during the budget planning being for 2016-17. Following discussion, *the allocations were noted.*

**16/89 Financial Statements**

**a) Letter from Skills Funding Agency (Agenda item 17, Paper O)**

The letter confirmed the latest situation in relation to the financial statements. The external auditor had confirmed there were no other issues with the statements. The SFA confirmed the College's financial health grade was satisfactory.

**b) Financial dashboard (Agenda item 18, Paper P)**

The financial dashboard was information that the SFA produced from various financial records for 2014-15. It included benchmarks from the sector for comparison purposes. Following discussion, *the reports were received.*

**16/90 Decisions associated with FRS102 (Agenda item 19, Paper Q)**

Members were invited to consider two options for the treatment of Government grants under the new accounting standard FRS102. This was for the financial year 2015-16 onwards. Using two examples based on 2014-15 accounts and an existing grant as an illustration, members were shown the differences between the accrual and performance methods. The SFA had confirmed that any decision about financial health would not be affected by choosing either method. It was also likely that the accruals option would be removed in 2019. Following discussion, *the performance method was confirmed as the preferred method.*

**SECTION D – STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENTS**

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**16/91 Annual Operating Statement – Progress Review (Agenda item 20, Paper R)**

Progress with the items due for completion were discussed. During the month, 4 had been completed, 1 partially completed and 1 was ongoing. Three items were rescheduled. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

**16/92 Growth Opportunities (Agenda item 21)**  
**a) Saudi Arabia (Paper S[i])**

The report represented the most up to date position based on the Principal's recent visit to Saudi Arabia to attend The Oxford Partnership (TOP) Board meeting on 14th March 2016. It also reflected the discussions from two additional meetings held in February with Activate Learning attended by some Board members. Members noted that the recruitment and retention of high quality staff was having a positive impact on the overall quality of the provision, which was assessed as good in all colleges. TOP is the highest performing group in the Kingdom. The discussion points that were commercially sensitive have been recorded in a separate annex at the end of these Minutes. Following discussion, *the report was noted*.

**b) Hyrdoponics**

Discussions were still taking place in relation to the Hydroponics project. There had been another visit to the site. As the original field identified for the project may not be big enough, another area was being considered. A further meeting was planned for 5<sup>th</sup> April 2016 to look at the site. Following discussion, *the update was noted*.

**c) Other opportunities**

This matter was considered to be confidential as it was commercially sensitive and is contained in a separate annex at the end of the Minutes.

**16/93 External reviews (Agenda item 22, Paper T)**

The FuSE partnership was working together. A working group had been formed as an Area Based Review steering group. Two development workshops were planned. The first meeting would be on 13<sup>th</sup> April 2016 and would look at high level economic data and key economic drivers. Other senior leadership team members would also attend as appropriate. A second workshop would follow on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2016. The latest area-based review guidance had been published and was attached as an annex to the paper. Members' attention was drawn to Annex F, P49 – 55 which set out the indicators and benchmarks to be used in such reviews. The SLT was undertaking an assessment of this information and applying college data to compare with the indicators to identify where the college was placed against the benchmarks. Following discussion, *the report was noted*.

**16/94 College Strategic Plan 2016/17 – 2021 (Draft) (Agenda item 23, Paper U)**

The Draft College Strategic Plan had been discussed at the Governor Development Day on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2016. The key change to the Draft Plan was to the Strategic Aims which the Board had agreed in principle subject to certain changes. The Strategic Aims had now been realigned in response to the feedback from the Board. The Mission, Vision and Values had also been updated since the last meeting. The next stage of the process would be a consultation with staff who would be asked to prioritise their top 6 values from the original list. External stakeholders would also be consulted on the final approved draft. An updated version of the Plan would be brought to the next Corporation meeting. Following discussion, *the report was received*.

## **SECTION E - RESOURCES**

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### **16/95 Current Developments – Progress Report (Agenda item 23)**

The athletics track contractor was back on site and work had recommenced. The Pavilion was close to completion and was expected to be finished within 3 weeks. The athletics track was expected to be finished by June 2016. There would be an official opening in the summer. Following discussion, *the update was noted.*

### **16/96 Commercial Enterprise Report (Equestrian Centre) (Agenda item 24, Paper V)**

The report reflected an improvement since the previous position. The Centre was not progressing at the same rate as other commercial enterprises. The immediate priority was for the Centre to be performing at the same level as other commercial enterprises. The Hydrotherapy Unit was improving year on year. Competitions and events were areas of concern. A new Yard Manager was starting. Part of his responsibility would be competitions. It was expected that this new role would address any concerns. Following discussion, *the report was received.*

## **SECTION F - GOVERNANCE**

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### **16/97 Development Day Review (Agenda item 25, Paper W)**

Members had received a report which provided a summary of what happened during the visit to Tresham College. Feedback from the day included some recurring messages, for example, both colleges had experienced similar challenges. The visit provided an opportunity for both colleges to share ideas for possible collaboration in the future. The visit also highlighted the benefit of keeping a dialogue open between Chairs and Principals.

Looking ahead to 2017, Members considered the potential of holding the next Development Day at Moulton College. The timing of the Day was likely to be when the Board would be considering recommendations from the area based review process. Consideration was also given to how the day might be organised. It was proposed that the day could start with the Corporation meeting with an earlier start time. This would be followed by the Development Day. Further plans in relation to visits could be agreed closer to the event. Following discussion, *the report was received.*

## **SECTION G – OTHER MATTERS**

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### **16/98 Date of next meeting (Agenda item 26)**

Thursday, 28<sup>th</sup> April 2016. The meeting would be followed by lunch served in the Chris Alderson-Smith dining room.

### **16/99 Any other business (Agenda item 27)**

#### **a) Daventry University Technical College (DUTC)**

A proposal has been sent to the DfE for one single trust and one governing body. The University would continue to be the key sponsor.

The meeting closed at 12.16 pm

Mr K Moulton and Mr L Howarth left the meeting