

## MOULTON COLLEGE

### Minutes of the Corporation Board held on Thursday, 27<sup>th</sup> April 2017

#### PART 1

**Present:** Mr R Thompson (in the Chair), Mr S Davies, Mr L Howarth, Mrs K Mackaness, Mr T Neville, Miss M Owen, Mr R Sanders, Mr A Thomson and Mr M Wakeford

**In attendance:** Mr G Davies, Mr C Jackson, Mrs S Field and Mrs G M Hulley

#### SECTION A – ROUTING AND STANDING ITEMS

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- 16/413 Apologies for absence (Agenda item 1)**  
Apologies were received from Mr A Clarkson, Mr R O'Driscoll, Mr R Sadler and Mr M Thomson. Mr A Hartley sent his apologies.
- 16/414 Declarations of interest (Agenda item 2)**  
Mr Howarth declared an interest in Agenda items 6, 10, 12, 18, 19 and 20. Mr Neville declared an interest in Agenda items 5, 9, 12, 13 and 19.
- 16/415 Minutes of the previous meeting (Agenda item 3, Paper A)**  
The minutes of the meeting held on the 30<sup>th</sup> March 2017 which had been circulated previously were approved as a true and accurate record.
- 16/416 Actions outstanding from the previous meeting (Agenda item 4, Paper B)**  
The Chair reported that all actions were either closed or progressing in line with agreed deadlines.

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

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**16/417 Principal and SLT's update (Agenda item 5)**

**a) Recruitment 2017-18**

The recruitment figures for 2017-18 were outlined and discussed. For full-time, further education (FE), there had been a 10% increase in applications compared to the previous year. The number of offers made and acceptances to date had also increased by 16% and 39% respectively for the same period. An Open Evening had taken place the previous day which had been well attended.

Higher Education (HE) recruitment had not changed since the previous month and there was still a reduced number of applications compared to the previous year. The final deadline for HE applications would be on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2017 and this would provide confirmation of actual numbers for 2017-18. This information would inform any decisions that were needed about resources.

For Apprenticeships, there had been a 7.6% increase in the total number of students on programme compared to last year. Advanced numbers had increased by 27.6%. Where Intermediate Apprentices were concerned, numbers were also good and there was every expectation of progression to Advanced Apprenticeships the following year. Infill numbers for Construction trades apprenticeships were also positive with an increase of 15.7%. Following discussion, *the report was received*.

**b) Student Retention**

The FE College target for retention was reported as 92%. Currently, overall College FE student retention was either on target or above with the exception of Construction and Landbased which were slightly below. This was a 4% improvement on the previous year. For HE, retention was slightly higher and doing well in all areas. Progression and completion would be a greater risk than retention. Following discussion, *the report was received*.

**c) Student Attendance**

The overall attendance for English and Mathematics was 81% which was a significant improvement compared to the same time last year. It was unlikely that this figure would improve any further before the end of the academic year as students would now be completing their exams. From 2017-18, all courses would include an exam-based assessment. The Board raised a number of questions about the potential impact these changes would have on students and College resources. **(Action 51)**

Overall FE attendance had remained static at 88%. Although this was just below the College target, this was still a 1% improvement on the previous year. In Apprenticeships, attendance was 90% which was a 4% improvement compared to the previous year. In HE, attendance across all programme areas was showing an increase compared to the same time last year. Following discussion, *the report was received*.

**SECTION C – TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT**

**16/418**

**Post-inspection action plan (Agenda item 6, Paper C)**

The Board received the latest version of the post-inspection action plan (PIAP). The PIAP continued to be reviewed on a fortnightly basis to assess the evidence of impact from the actions being taken. Of the 19 key actions identified, 11% were rated green, 78% amber and 11% red. Improvement was evident in relation to Apprenticeships. The current overall achievement was above the comparable point of the previous year and predicted to be significantly above last year's out-turn at the end of the year. Various actions that had been taken with English and Mathematics were having a positive impact. Teaching and learning had improved to amber following an initial analysis from the second round of lesson observations undertaken in March 2017. Significant improvements were observed in lessons with demonstrable positive changes in practice compared to the first round of observations. Detailed analysis was being completed and a report would be taken to the next Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee in June 2017. Two risks were shared with the Board. Monitoring of student progress against agreed targets remained inconsistent. There was also inconsistent practice in relation to the development of English in vocational settings. The current PIAP had been shared with the curriculum management team and a number of follow up actions had been identified to address the risk areas.

A number of questions were raised by the Board including:

- (a) How the RAG rated actions are monitored and what were the management's expectations in terms of changing from amber to green.
- (b) An update of any further feedback from the Ofsted 'support and challenge' HMI including expectations from the next meeting which was planned for 24<sup>th</sup> May 2017.

(c) Further detail of evidence to date that indicated improvements since the last inspection.

Following discussion, *the report was noted*.

**16/419**

**Termly Safeguarding Report (Agenda item 7, Paper D)**

The termly report was discussed. Members received an update on the latest situation in relation to the number of safeguarding cases that arose during the spring term 2016-17. Since the start of the academic year, 60% of the total number of LAC (looked after children) students had withdrawn from College provision. A review had been undertaken to investigate the reasons for the withdrawals. In some instances, external factors beyond the College's control were responsible for the withdrawal. The review also provided the College with an opportunity to consider its operating procedures. An action plan had been produced which would ensure LAC students were adequately supported and to help to transition into the College. The report also included an update on additional areas of safeguarding work and changes since the last report in January 2017. There had been an increase in the number of students who had referred themselves for wellbeing support. Members were presented with a selection of data that had been collected. The Link Governor for High Needs and Safeguarding provided a summary of his findings from a recent visit. The analysis indicated a need further investigation by the College of how it can better support students in relation to their mental health needs. The Board confirmed it would welcome further thoughts on this. **(Action 52)** Following discussion, *the termly report was noted*.

**16/420**

**College Policy Review (Agenda item 8)**

**a) Equality Policy Annual Review (Paper E)**

This was the annual review of the Policy. Minor amendments had been made. These included updating the strategic aims in line with the College Strategic Plan 2016-2021; reference to the recently approved Transgender Policy; and, date changes. Following discussion, *the policy was approved*.

**16/421**

**Programme Area Report – Higher Education (Agenda item 9, Paper F)**

The report was outlined and discussed. It provided a summary of the area's current position as well as future ideas for development. Recruitment and the associated pressures had been discussed on a number of occasions. The report included a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis. This indicated the many opportunities for the College to develop a vibrant and innovative HE offer that would appeal to applicants and employers. Strategic support would be needed to make the proposed changes to current practice and to support new models of delivery. The report also included a number of actions which would be required to deliver the vision. The Link Governor for HE reported that at his last visit, he had suggested that it would be important for the Board to be involved in any discussions about the future direction of HE. The next version of the report which would be brought to the Board would include clear recommendations for revised subject areas based on employer demand. Following discussion, *it was agreed this remains an important area of work for the College and the Board needed to be involved with its development on a more regular basis; Table 1 of the report should be updated to show a 3-year trend for the enrolment numbers (Action 53); the report was received*.

Mr C Jackson and Mrs S Field left the meeting.

## SECTION D – FINANCE

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### 16/422 **Accounts for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> July 2016 (Agenda item 10)**

#### **a) Moulton College Developments (MCD) Ltd (Paper G)**

#### **b) Moulton College Enterprises (MCE) Ltd (Paper H)**

#### **c) Moulton Trading (MT) Ltd (Paper I)**

The accounts were outlined and discussed. MCD Ltd acted as a development company for the College estate and for the period in question, it had made a profit of £212,739. MCE Ltd operated some plant and machinery for the College and had made a profit of £6,935. As a result of gift aid, there would be no tax for either of these companies. MT Ltd operated the transport fleet for the College and had made a profit of £15,346. This was taxable and it was agreed that further discussions about future gift aid payments would be required. The Accounts had been reviewed by the external auditors and there were no outstanding queries about the figures provided. The external auditors would sign the accounts at the end of the week. The results for all three company accounts would be consolidated into the College accounts. The Accounts had been scrutinised by the Finance Scrutiny Panel (FSP) earlier in the week and had made a recommendation for the Board to approve. The Accounts had been signed by the two Directors. Following discussion, *the Accounts were approved.*

### 16/423 **Funding Report 2016-17 (Agenda item 11, Paper J)**

The Funding Report was based on R08 and was considered a fair reflection of the College's activity for 2016/17. The Report showed that the College had recruited 37 fewer learners than allocation. This was 12 less than was included in the R04 return. The data was reasonably consistent. 16-18 Apprenticeships was £26k short of the annual target but on target. It was rated as amber but there were no concerns. 19+ Apprenticeships was now £98k above the annual budget and rated green. As reported last month, not all of this would be funded. The Adult Education Budget (AEB) was currently rated as red. This was due to a delay with enrolments on the distance learning provision. Members were informed of the actions that had been taken. Any improvement was not expected until April 2017. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

### 16/424 **Management Accounts (Agenda item 12)**

#### **a) March 2017 (Paper K)**

The March Management Accounts were outlined and discussed. There was a favourable variance of £335k. Income was £274k better than budget. This was due to HE tuition fees and apprenticeship income which were higher than budgeted. Income for 16-18 funding should be close to target. Income for the Adult Education Budget (AEB) was currently below expectations. Although the distance learning provider remained confident of meeting their contract, a meeting is being arranged to discuss progress with the contract and actions that were being taken deliver within the required period. Pay was positive to budget by £74k and non-pay was slightly adverse to budget. Members were assured that the College should meet or potentially exceed its original budget expectations. Staff costs remained below the target of 52% of turnover at 50.3%. Cash at the end of March was favourable by more than £460k. This was partly due to a grant received relating to the Food and Drink Innovation Centre (FADIC). The Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) showed that the College's financial health score was still 'Inadequate' due to all of the loans counting as 'current liabilities'. The College would return to 'Satisfactory' financial health once the revised restructured loans become effective, and a

planned target date of early June 2017 has been set. Following discussion, *the accounts were approved.*

**16/425 Funding Allocations 2017-18 (Agenda item 13, Paper L)**

The College had still not received confirmation of the main allocations from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) for 16-18 and 19+ students. Where the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) allocation was concerned, there was a reduction of £176k compared to the previous year. This was related to a reduction in Band B funded students of £78k; a reduction to targeted allocations of £92k; and, elimination of old regime students to £6k. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

**SECTION E - AUDIT**

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**16/426 Audit Committee Minutes: 10<sup>th</sup> April 2017 (Agenda item 14, Paper M)**

The minutes of the meeting were outlined and discussed. Members' attention was drawn to Minute 16/42. Auditors had given a limited assurance where there had been a number of outstanding audit actions where at the time no progress had been made. Although the Committee had received an explanation about why the actions were outstanding, an interim report had been requested for submission by 1<sup>st</sup> May 2017. This report would provide confirmation of the exact status for each of the outstanding recommendations and the planned actions for completion. The Board was informed of improvements that had now been implemented which would ensure this situation would not arise again. Following discussion, *the report was received.*

**16/427 Audit Committee Draft Annual Report (Agenda item 15, Paper N)**

The draft report was discussed. It had been prepared by the Interim Director of Finance and the Clerk to the Corporation on behalf of the Audit Committee. The report set out the matters that the Audit Committee was required to report on to the Corporation including its conclusions in respect of risk management, internal control, regularity and external audit. The report had been updated to reflect a number of updates to outstanding actions since the last Audit Committee meeting in April 2017. The Committee had recommended that the report should be presented to the Board at its meeting in April 2017 for any additional feedback. The report would be finalised once the College accounts had been approved by the external auditors. This was likely to take place in June 2017 once assurances around the bank loan had been received. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

**16/428 Audit Self-assessment questionnaire (Agenda item 16, Paper O)**

The College completed the questionnaire as part of the regulatory audits. It was presented to the Audit Committee at its meeting in April 2017. The Committee had recommended that the questionnaire should be presented to the Board at its meeting in April 2017 for any additional feedback. Completion of the questionnaire confirmed compliance with the financial memorandum between the College and the ESFA (Education and Skills Funding Agency). The document would need to be signed by the Accounting Officer and Chair of Governors. It would be presented with the Audit annual report. The responses related to the period 2015-16. There were no areas of concern in relation to the answers provided. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

## **SECTION F – STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENTS**

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- 16/429 Saudi Arabia (Agenda item 17)**  
The accounts for The Oxford Partnership (TOP) Colleges of Excellence (CoE) had just been approved by TOP Board the previous week for the period January 2015 to December 2016. The accounts recorded a surplus. The Board was informed of the partnership arrangements. Al Madinah was inspected by the CoE equivalent of Ofsted and a very positive outcome was expected. Once received, the inspection report would be shared with the Corporation. The Principal's next visit was planned for June 2017 for a Board meeting. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*
- 16/430 Area Reviews (Agenda item 18, Paper P)**  
The report was outlined and discussed. The last meeting of the steering group had taken place on the 27<sup>th</sup> March 2017. The process was now finished. The Area review team had accepted the final recommendation ratified by the Corporation Board on the 30<sup>th</sup> March 2017:  
  
*'Moulton College to stand-alone as a specialist national Land Based college also delivering Construction, Sport and Food and Drink Manufacturing for further and higher education.'*  
  
The report included the full recommendation that would be in the final report. The report would remain confidential until published. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*
- 16/431 Key Performance Indicators [KPIs] (Agenda item 19, Paper Q)**  
The report provided Members with an update on progress being made towards the key KPIs. The report included some KPIs which had not previously featured as they were reported on termly. To date, 9 KPIs had improved, 6 had stayed the same and 8 had not improved. The report was supported by a detailed analysis of each KPI. Clarification was provided for any KPI where an improvement hadn't occurred. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*
- 16/432 Operating Statement 2016-17 – Progress Review (Agenda item 20, Paper R)**  
The Operating Statement was outlined and discussed. The report included a table which presented a summary of progress of items in each category compared to the previous month. To date, 32% had been completed which was an improvement of 6% compared to the previous month. This figure would increase each month as the year progressed. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*
- 16/433 Growth Opportunities (Agenda item 21)**  
The College had signed a formal agreement with the Centre of Applied Pet Ethology (COAPE) to collaborate on the delivery of a specialist behaviour stream within the new Foundation Degree in Canine and Feline studies which is scheduled for validation in May. This was a commercial arrangement where both partners would recruit students to the provision and COAPE would be paid for the delivery of specialist modules. The course was scheduled to start in September 2017 (subject to validation). Board Members confirmed that this was an exciting opportunity for the College. Following discussion, *the report was received.*

## **SECTION G – RESOURCES**

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- 16/434**      **Current developments (Agenda item 22)**  
**a) Veterinary Practice (Papers S[i], S[ii] and S[iii])**  
Members had previously been informed of the College's intention to move into a formal agreement with Abington Park Veterinary Practice about an extension to their facilities. Indicative plans were shared with the Board for information. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*
- b) Food and Drink Innovation Centre**  
Proposals following the tender process were due in on the 28<sup>th</sup> April 2017. A planning application had been submitted and there had been no objections. There was one item being considered in relation to highways. A decision would be determined by an officer. Approval was expected within the next 10 days. It was expected that a post tender evaluation report would be brought to the next Board meeting. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*
- c) H20ganics**  
A meeting had taken place earlier in the week with the individual responsible for the project. Details of the commercial arrangement to construct a specialist growing facility were outlined and discussed with the Board. Following discussion, *the Board gave in principle agreement to proceed with the development of Heads of Terms.*
- 16/435**      **Health and Safety Policy Annual Review (Agenda item 23, Paper T)**  
One change to the Policy was being proposed in Section 2.11. The College would decide what First Aid provision was required in each area by undertaking a first-aid needs assessment. Other changes related to job titles. Following discussion, *the Health and Safety Policy was approved.*
- 16/436**      **Commercial Enterprise Report – Management Centre (Agenda item 24, Paper U)**  
The report was outlined and discussed. Since August 2016, over 600 learners had studied courses through the Management Centre. Income for most subject areas had increased compared to the previous year. The report included a number of actions for those subject areas where income had not yet achieved target. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

## **SECTION H – GOVERNANCE**

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- 16/437**      **Meeting dates (Agenda item 25, Paper V)**  
Meeting dates for 2017-18 were outlined. Dates of meetings for the Audit Committee and Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee would be confirmed at their meetings in summer 2017. Following discussion, *the dates were noted.*

## **SECTION I – ITEMS TO NOTE**

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- 16/438**      **Education and Skills Funding Agency [ESFA] (Agenda item 26, Paper W)**  
A letter from the Chief Executive of the Education and Skills Funding Agency to all college accounting officers was outlined and discussed. Members' attention was drawn to the key points raised in the letter. The contents of the letter had also been shared with members of the Finance Scrutiny Panel (FSP) at its meeting earlier in the week. Following discussion, *the contents of the letter were noted.*

## **SECTION J – OTHER MATTERS**

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**16/439**

**Date of next meeting**

Thursday, 25<sup>th</sup> May 2017 at 9.30 am in M6

**16/440**

**Any other business**

A presentation was made to Mrs K Mackaness and Mr R Sanders. Both Members were leaving the Board after 16 and 8 years respectively of service. The Chair thanked both Members for their hard work, dedication and contribution to the College.

Part 1 of the meeting concluded. Mr L Howarth and Miss M Owen left the meeting.