

MOULTON COLLEGE
CORPORATION BOARD

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 9th May 2019 at 9.30 am

Present: Mr D McVean (in the Chair), Mr A Clarkson, Mrs K Delamain-Blunt, Mr A Eastland, Mr B Hansford, Mrs P Hawkesford, Mr L Howarth, Ms L Knapp, Mr C Matts, Mr T Neville, Ms A Turner, Mr A Thomson and Mr M Wakeford

In attendance: Mr D Aldridge, Miss A S Bruce, Mr G Davies, Mrs G M Hulley, Mrs J Matthews and Mr M Simmons

PART 1

SECTION A – ROUTINE AND STANDING ITEMS

- 19/94 Apologies for absence (Agenda item 1)**
Apologies for absence were received from Mr I James and Mrs H King.
- 19/95 Declarations of interest (Agenda item 2)**
Mr T Neville declared an interest in agenda items 5, 9, 11 and 13.
Mr L Howarth declared an interest in agenda items 5, 7 11 and 12.
- 19/96 Minutes of the last meeting (Agenda item 3, Paper A)**
The minutes of the meeting held on the 28th March 2019 had been circulated previously and were approved as a true and accurate record.
- 19/97 Actions outstanding (Agenda item 4, Paper B)**
- Action 108 - Safeguarding**
The piece of research to compare the success rates of students recorded on MyConcern compared with those students not in receipt of this support was ongoing. A report on the findings from the research would be prepared for a meeting of the TLA Committee in the next academic year. (Open)
- Action 111 – Quality Improvement Plan**
Capital funding proposals were currently being completed by staff. These would be considered by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). This item could now be moved to Finance and Resources Committee. (Closed)
- Action 114 – Health and Safety Audit findings**
Findings from the previous week’s Ofsted inspection had confirmed that progress had been made. Health and Safety was considered to be embedded in the organisation and no issues were identified. The link governor champion would continue to be involved in this priority area and report back to the Board on progress. (Closed)
- Action 115 – 117 – Annual Farm report**
A meeting had taken place between the Vice Chair, Deputy Principal and Farm Manager following the production of the annual report. At a meeting of the Search and Governance Committee that morning, members had agreed to a proposal from the Vice Chair that a business advisory group should convened (**Acton 130 – Deputy Principal**). This group would include industry experts who would provide advice to governors. There would also be an opportunity for this group to explore further commercial opportunities with the

current College facilities. Priorities for the first group would be land-based, food and drink, and the wider environment. Membership of the group should also include alumni, the Assistant Director of Commercial Enterprises and SEMLEP. In addition to terms of reference for the group, an agreed set of deliverables would be required. Where membership of the group was concerned, consideration should not only be given to exploring new curriculum opportunities but also advice on appropriate methods of delivery. There was also a need to be mindful that the College already had employer liaison groups who looked at various course modules. The Chair emphasised the importance of alternative routes for income generation through the commercial enterprises (Closed).

Action 118 – Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)

The current version of the QIP would be updated and further enhanced to take into account recent feedback from the Ofsted inspection. (Closed)

Action 120-124 – Committee membership

The Search and Governance Committee had held an in depth discussion that morning around the current terms of reference for each Committee. Members had focused their attention on a number of strategic themes around risk management and how each Committee could maximise impact upon the student experience. An annual review of each Committees' terms of reference would be completed at the summer meetings. (Closed)

Action 125 – Any other business

A very positive meeting had taken place with a contact from a national infrastructure project. Discussion had been wide ranging around all aspects of the College's provision. An offer to provide some guest lecturers had been accepted. Thanks were extended to Mark Wakeford for introducing the contact to the College. (Closed)

SECTION B – PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE

19/98

- a) Strategic Plan update (April 2019) (Agenda item 5, Paper Ci)**
- b) Key Performance Indicators (Agenda item 5, Paper Cii)**
- c) National Achievement Rate Tables (NART): Analysis (Agenda item 6, Paper D)**

Members were informed that Paper Ci had been shared with Ofsted the previous week during the inspection. Clarification had been sought around a number of areas including retention and the impact upon second year students. Significant improvements to staff turnover had been acknowledged as a positive impact on the student experience. In response to a question from the Board about the benchmarking analysis and improvements to outcomes in 2018-19, members received a detailed analysis of expected outcomes for each level of course. A rationale for each level was also provided.

A detailed discussion was held around English and Maths attendance. Specifically, assurances were sought around any additional actions that needed to be taken to improve attendance further to at least the national average and for this to happen quickly. Members were already aware of the pastoral support officers and College community officer appointments. As these were all very new in post, the impact on attendance was not yet measurable. Different ways of incentivising attendance were outlined, including offering additional qualifications. The Board emphasised the importance for students to understand the vocational relevance of English

and Maths. As this had implications upon the delivery of teaching and learning, details of staff training that had been delivered to date were outlined. An English and Maths training programme had also been commissioned from the Education and Training Foundation. The Chair highlighted the excellent English and Maths provision already in the County and questioned the extent to which the College was giving due consideration to any partnership arrangements to support this priority. The Chair emphasised that English and Maths remained one of the College's biggest risks. It was agreed that a paper would be prepared for the next Corporation meeting in July (**Action 131 – Director of Curriculum and Quality Improvement**). This paper would set out a short-term strategy to address the issues raised during the discussion. The paper should also detail specific actions that were required for the next 2 to 3 years. Any capital expenditure requirements should also be included. Following discussion, *the reports were received*.

SECTION C – TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

19/99

Quality Improvement Plan (Agenda item 7, Paper E)

The report was outlined and discussed. This was the same version that had been shared with inspectors the previous week. Feedback from that visit confirmed that the current version was found to be too descriptive and a recommendation had been made to place a greater emphasis upon impact. Members received confirmation that this would be addressed in the updated version. Furthermore, the post-inspection action plan would be incorporated into the next version of the QIP so that there would be only one action plan. Following discussion, *the report was received*.

Questions:

- a. Where staff voice was concerned, had the Board had sight of a staff satisfaction survey? *Ofsted carried out a staff survey during the inspection. The response rate was over 50% which was very good. For confidentiality reasons, the College could not have sight of the results. The lead inspector confirmed, however, that staff feedback had been very positive and that this level of engagement with the survey was exceptional. There had also been significant improvements to staff morale.*
- b. The Chair of the Audit Committee recommended that the RAG ratings in the next version of the QIP should be made very clear about progress against particular measures. He commented that the timelines in the current version were quite long and this change would help to get a better sense of whether the College was on track.

19/100

Safeguarding (Agenda item 8)

a) College Report (Paper F)

b) Governor Champion

The report included some comparable data from the previous year. The report provided detail by each programme area. There had been a significant increase in the number of safeguarding concerns raised by students compared to the previous year. The nature of the concerns had also increased. The governor champion drew attention to the impact upon staff workload. Specifically, whether the team was coping with the workload and if they were receiving sufficient support to deal with the mental and emotional impact upon themselves to handle that workload. Members received an assurance that staff were receiving supervision to help with increased workloads as the number of issues they had to deal with were increasing. The

Safeguarding team was being strengthened to reflect the increases to workload. Following discussion, *the report was received*.

SECTION D – HIGHER EDUCATION (HE)

19/101

HE Access and Participation Plan (Agenda item 9)

The College had received a raft of data from the Office for Students (OfS). This would be used to inform a self-assessment using agreed criteria to help determine how the College can get more under-represented students into HE. The College was required to write strategic aims and objectives for the next 5 years. A task and finish group which included 4 governors from the Teaching, Learning and Assessment (TLA) Committee was meeting later in the day to look at the scope of the proposed initial strategic aims as a result of analysing the self-assessment. Feedback would be gathered on the current version of the Access & Participation (A&P) Plan. The task and finish group would be asked to review another version of the A&P Plan towards the end of the month with a view to recommending it to the TLA Committee. The final A&P Plan would be submitted to the OfS at the beginning of July 2019. Following discussion, *the report was received*.

SECTION E – FINANCE

19/102

Minutes of the last Finance and Resources meeting (Agenda item 10, Paper G)

The unconfirmed minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee held earlier in the week had previously been circulated to members of the Board. The Chair of this Committee drew the Board's attention to:

- a. The projected outturn for the end of the year was expected to be as forecasted.
- b. The financial health score of the College would be satisfactory at the end of this year as far as the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) was concerned.
- c. Two properties were in the process of being sold at the end of this year in line with the estate strategy.
- d. A large debt had been paid during the month.
- e. Everything was on target with Health and Safety and the Committee was pleased with the progress shown in the action plan.
- f. Feedback was provided on the business continuity plan. This plan would be reviewed to ensure that there were sufficient levels of governor involvement. Once this had been completed, a copy would be circulated to all members of the Board. (**Action 132** – Clerk)
- g. The Committee received a report on staff turnover which confirmed that this had improved significantly compared to the previous year.
- h. An update on staff voice had been provided. Initial feedback from the most recent meeting had been positive.

Following discussion, *the report was received*.

19/103

Management accounts (Agenda item 11, Paper H)

The report was taken as read and members were invited to ask questions. The Chair of Corporation drew attention to the feedback from the Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee in relation to the accuracy of the forecast. He explained that the Board can be reassured by this statement.

Furthermore, it was important to recognise that the financial health score of 'satisfactory' was one of several metrics that should be borne in mind. A wide-ranging discussion was held around transport with one point raised around

the student cohort which was from across the County and the extent to which distance could be a barrier. Although the College could not accommodate a free bus pass to every student, bursaries were available for lower income families who would be able to get a free bus pass. Transport was also heavily subsidised by the College. Following discussion, *the report was received.*

SECTION F – RESOURCES

19/104

Health and Safety (Agenda item 12):

a) Continuous improvement plan (Paper I)

The latest version of the Health and Safety continuous improvement plan was outlined and discussed. The improvement plan provided the current situation as at the end of April 2019. Actions had either been completed, were underway or were not yet due. No actions were overdue. Following discussion, *the report was received.*

b) Health and Safety Governor Champion

Members' attention was drawn to the new structure of the continuous improvement plan which also included a section on leadership and communication. The governor champion explained how crucial both were to changing culture in the College. Health and Safety meetings had been revamped and were now much more productive. The governor champion also had regular meetings with the Health and Safety Advisor. Mr Wakeford was thanked for his ongoing input at each Health and Safety Committee meeting.

The Vice Chair of the Corporation had attended a conference the previous day on good governance. He provided feedback on his findings from the day. This included a workshop which considered actions that needed to be taken in response to a series of Health and Safety incidents. In view of the recent production of the business continuity plan, it was considered timely for the Board to take part in a similar session. It was agreed that a training session should be arranged for governors on this topic (**Action 133** – Clerk). Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

19/105

Marketing plan and strategy (Agenda item 13, Paper J)

The report was outlined and discussed. It had been completed by the Assistant Director of Student Services in conjunction with a specialist consultancy firm that dealt with educational marketing. The Deputy Principal outlined the various sections within the report. Members' attention was drawn to recent appointments to the marketing team. The report included a series of proposals to strengthen marketing further.

Feedback from the Board included:

- a. The lack of recognition to alumni and employer voice. Both were really important to the College. Alumni could also potentially be a source for teacher recruitment in the future.
- b. Any implementation plan needed to be mindful of external research findings around changes to the workforce and retraining opportunities that the College could support.
- c. There was no sense of College ownership in terms of who was responsible for marketing, who would follow up actions and cascade internally.
- d. There was a need to raise the profile of the College's digital strategy, social media and engine optimisation.

- e. Greater emphasis was needed on impact, for example, the findings from the independent research completed around destination data. The report included some very positive information which could be used to create key messages from a student and staff perspective.
- f. Further feedback should be gained from Mrs Katie Delamain-Blunt whose background was in marketing.

Following discussion, *it was agreed an implementation plan would be prepared for the July Corporation meeting (Action 134 – Assistant Director Student Services) although this should not prevent work progressing as planned; and, the report was received.*

SECTION G – GOVERNANCE

- 19/106 Terms of reference (Agenda item 14)**
 A Search and Governance Committee meeting had been held earlier that morning. The Committee focused on the terms of reference for each Committee. There had been a particular focus on ensuring that there was a much greater emphasis upon risk management and student experience. The next stage would be for each Committee to complete its annual review of its respective terms of reference during the summer meetings. Any changes would then be ratified by the Corporation at its meeting in July 2019. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*
- 19/107 Date of next meeting (Agenda item 15)**
 Thursday, 4th July 2019 at 9.30am in M6.
- 19/108 Any other business (Agenda item 16)**
- a. **Staffing:** Good progress was being made with the recruitment process to date. There was a reduced reliance on agency staff. There were still some areas of significant challenge which had been discussed in previous meetings. An interim solution had been found for Careers guidance but some key challenges remained in relation to a longer-term solution.
 - b. **Student and Staff Governors:** There had been a good response to these two vacant roles.
 - c. **Awards ceremonies:** As reported previously, these would be totally different this year. Invitations had been sent to governors to attend.

Mr A Eastland and Mr L Howarth left the meeting.