

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

**Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 28<sup>th</sup> February 2019 at 4.45 pm**

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

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

**SECTION A – ROUTINE AND STANDING ITEMS**

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**19/32 Apologies for absence (Agenda item 1)**  
Apologies for absence were received from Mr B Hansford, Mr C Matts and Mrs H King.

**19/33 Declarations of interest (Agenda item 2)**  
There were no declarations of interest.

**19/34 Minutes of previous meeting (Agenda item 3, Paper A)**  
The minutes of the meeting held on the 31<sup>st</sup> January 2019 had been circulated previously and were approved as a true and accurate record.

**19/35 Actions outstanding from the last meeting (Agenda item 4, Paper B)**  
All outstanding actions were progressing in line with agreed deadlines.

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

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**19/36 Self-assessment report 2018-19 (Agenda item 5, Paper C)**  
A self-assessment report (SAR) had been produced for the period ending January 2019. The aim of the SAR was to provide an accurate evaluation of the College's performance against Ofsted criteria. The proposed grade in the SAR for 'overall effectiveness' was a grade 3. The data used in the analysis for the SAR was from last year. As the SAR was for the period ending January 2019, this had provided an opportunity to reflect on various actions that had been completed to date for some of the issues previously identified. The report also included a number of graphs and charts. These would be helpful for governors to gain a broader understanding of the current student population from a number of different perspectives. Where applicable, national benchmarking data had been included for comparison purposes.

Further clarification was sought about the Ofsted process in terms of practical arrangements for the observations during the inspection. Members were informed that what was observed in the classroom was a major factor upon judgements made during the process. Management observations of teaching, learning and assessment were being undertaken on an ongoing basis and a paper would be presented to the next Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee later in March on the findings to date.

A Governor queried potential opportunities around improving advice on progression and careers advice. This was something that the governor considered that the College could address reasonably easily if the appropriate

advice and guidance was made available. Members were informed that the College was actively seeking to appoint a careers officer and interview arrangements were outlined. The Deputy Principal highlighted the importance of this role and the priority that was being given to it. Acknowledging the importance of progression and career advice, the Corporation also received an assurance that the majority of current staff were able to fulfil this function. Work would also commence the following week with the College's current students in terms of their progression. Staff would be working with students to encourage them, subject to certain criteria being met, to continue at the College from Level 2 to Level 3, from Level 3 to Higher Education or if more appropriate for their individual circumstances, move to an apprenticeship or directly into employment. The College aimed to work with the vast majority of FE students over the next few weeks. Following discussion, *the report was received.*

19/37

### **Quality improvement plan 2018-19 (Agenda item 6, Paper D)**

Following feedback from the Corporation last year, the format for the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) had been changed. It was now presented in a Word document. The Director of Curriculum and Quality Improvement explained that all of the areas from the previous SAR had been included into this QIP. The report was also based on the Ofsted monitoring visit in November 2018 and suggestions from the Northampton High Needs monitoring visit in November 2018.

Further clarification was sought about the RAG ratings. Members were informed that if an action was on target to be achieved by the set date but not fully completed, it would be rated Amber. If an action had been fully achieved and closed down, the rating was Green. If an action had not made the progress expected or had not been achieved by the deadline, it would be rated Red. Governors agreed with the importance of an agreed RAG rating system that can be understood by everyone. Acknowledging that the QIP would develop and evolve over the coming months, the Corporation invited the College Executive to give further consideration to the QIP in terms of:

- Ensuring that any significant risks or issues can be clearly identified.
- Considering whether a more cautious approach to the definition of each RAG rating was required. One example suggested was to use Amber if an action had not yet started.
- Reviewing some of the target dates. There were some actions that Governors queried whether they could be completed before the deadline specified in the report.
- Further exploring how risks can be managed throughout the duration of the plan.
- Continuing to factor in discussions at College Executive level around any additional resource implications within the approved budget.
- Staff training and support: any alternative arrangements that could be made available for staff who were needed to cover classes when other colleagues were absent. This would accommodate demand from staff who were committed to additional training and support. The student experience would also be further enhanced.

In response to a question about the progress the College had made since the last Ofsted inspection in March 2019, a number of key points were highlighted for the Corporation to note. Any inspection was focused on the College's

current students. There was also a need to be mindful of the fact that the grades received from Ofsted would be based on last year's results. Based on previous discussions at Corporation or Committee meetings, Governors were very familiar with the results for 2016-17 and 2017-18. An important factor to note was the evidence from the College which demonstrated that students had made better progress. This was partly linked to retention which was much better than last year. There was also the need to look at a range of ways of demonstrating that in-year progress had been made. Evidence of this would be brought to the next TLA Committee. In summary, the College was now looking at a way of tracking in year progress; the College had a new regime; there were new processes in place; and most importantly, the student experience had improved.

The Chair thanked the Director of Curriculum and Quality Improvement for the report. The new format was welcomed by the Corporation. From a governance perspective, the Chair confirmed that: *the TLA Committee would scrutinise the QIP at its next meeting in March 2019. The Audit Committee would give some consideration at its next meeting to the processes by which the RAG ratings were agreed. This would ensure there was not only rigour but an additional level of assurance. The Corporation would continue to monitor the QIP at future meetings. The report was received.*

## **SECTION C – FINANCE**

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**19/38**

### **Lease of former garden centre (Agenda item 7)**

Following the closure of the garden centre, the veterinary practice had requested they would like to take on the lease for that building. The Chief Finance Officer requested delegated authority to execute the lease on behalf of the Corporation. Members were informed that the current lease would be surrendered and a new lease drawn up. Advice had been taken from Arnold Thomson Solicitors. Two Board members would be required to sign the lease including the Principal. The lease would be for 25 years. Members were informed of the income that would be generated by the arrangement. The College would also receive a percentage of the turnover. The veterinary practice would be responsible for any repairs to the building. The terms of the new lease were the same as the old lease so the Corporation would not have to approve any changes. Following discussion, *the Corporation approved the decision for the Principal and Chair to sign the lease.*

Miss A S Bruce left the meeting.

## **SECTION D – RESOURCES**

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**19/39**

### **Health and Safety Audit (Agenda item 8, Paper E)**

In March 2018, an independent health and safety audit had been completed. The same organisation returned to the College in January 2019 to complete a follow up audit. The report confirmed that:

*Health & Safety has been considered on several levels and the work that is being completed is to a very high, safe standard. I have no doubt that the students and the employees working on the campus are safe, and that their safety is paramount to all those concerned'. (Bradley Environmental Consultants Ltd, February 2019)*

The College Health and Safety Advisor had produced a post-audit action plan which would be shared at the next Finance and Resources Committee meeting. (**Action 119** – Deputy Principal)

## GOVERNANCE

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19/40

### Appointments and committee membership (Agenda item 8)

#### a) Governor appointments

Mr A Thomson had completed his first, 4-year term and his reappointment was recommended by the Search and Governance Committee. This was proposed by David McVean, seconded by Ian James *and approved unanimously*.

The appointment of Mrs P Hawkesford was recommended by the Search and Governance Committee. Pauline Hawkesford was currently a co-opted member of the TLA Committee having previously been interviewed by the Chair of Corporation and Principal. Her appointment as a governor and member of the Teaching, Learning and Assessment committee *was approved unanimously*.

#### b) Committee appointments

The Search and Governance Committee recommended a number of new Committee appointments:

- Mr D McVean as Chair of the Search and Governance Committee (Proposer – Mr I James; Seconder – Mr T Neville)
- Mr C Matts as Chair of the Remuneration Committee and Vice Chair of the Search and Governance Committee (Proposer – Mr M Wakeford; Seconder – Ms L Knapp)
- Mr T Neville as Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee (Proposer – Mr I James; Seconder – Mr A Clarkson)

#### c) Committee membership:

Following discussion, the Corporation approved a number of recommendations that had been agreed at the Search and Governance Committee held earlier in the day.

- Each Committee should review its terms of reference to ensure that they were fit for purpose now that the Corporation had agreed that the College would remain as an independent, standalone, specialist College (**Action 120** – Chairs of Committee)
- The Finance Committee would be renamed Finance and Resources Committee to reflect its wider remit of both physical and human resources.
- The terms of reference for Finance and Resources Committee would need to be updated to reflect this change (**Action 121** - Chair of Finance and Resources).
- Each Committee required at least one Vice Chair. This would ensure there was at least one other governor to support a Committee Chair; to deputise for a Chair in his/her absence; and, as part of succession planning. Each Chair of Committee should decide if one or more Vice Chairs are required (**Action 122** – Chairs of Committee).
- An additional staff and student governor should be invited to join the Corporation following an election process (**Action 123** – Clerk).

- The Instrument and Articles of Government will be amended to reflect this change (**Action 124** – Clerk).

**19/41**

**Corporation meetings 2018-19 (Agenda item 9, Paper F)**

The report listed the Corporation and Committee meetings for the current academic year. There had been a number of additional Corporation and Committee meetings arranged throughout the year. The report had been updated to reflect this. The Corporation had previously agreed with a recommendation from the Search and Governance Committee around streamlining the number of Corporation and Committee meetings to support more effective and efficient governance. Following discussion, *the Corporation approved the report's recommendation that the proposed meeting planned for 6<sup>th</sup> June 2019 was not required; and, the report was received.*

**SECTION E – CLOSING ITEMS**

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**19/42**

**Any other business (Agenda item 10)**

**a) HS2**

Mr M Wakeford informed the Corporation of an offer that had been made to the College by the Skills Manager at HS2 Ltd. This followed previous discussions by the Corporation around identifying the training and skills needed by College students to set them up effectively for prosperous careers within the Construction industry. The Skills Manager had offered to provide the latest information in relation to the current picture on labour market forecasting for Northamptonshire and the surrounding regions. It was agreed that in the first instance, the Skills Manager from HS2 Ltd should meet with the Principal and her team to discuss in more detail. The Principal would then report back to the Corporation (**Action 125** – Principal). Following discussion, *Mr Wakeford was thanked for sharing the opportunity with the Corporation; and, the report was noted.*

**19/43**

**Date and time of next meeting (Agenda item 11)**

Thursday, 28<sup>th</sup> March 2019 at 9.30 am in M6

Mr L Howarth and Mr A Eastland left the meeting.