

Highbury College

Minutes of the Corporation Meeting held at the College at 5.00 pm on 22 March 2016

Present: Dr L Carter, Mr M Craft, Mr P Daneshvar, Mr L Davies, Ms N Kanram, Mr A Lorabi, Mrs S Mbubaegbu, Mr A Minter, Ms D Moody, Mr J Rees-Evans, Mr A Turner, Mrs N Youern (Chair)

Apologies: Ms F Calderbank, Mr M Lawther

In Attendance: Mr J Cox, Group Finance Director
Ms L Davies, Quality and Standards Manager
Ms S Deol, MD Education and Skills
Ms A Ellis
Ms B Green, Safety, Health and Environment Manager
Ms P Schweitzer, Clerk
Mr K Scribbins, Interim Clerk

Observer: Ms J Edgecombe

Minutes

Part 1 Standing Items

2512 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Ms F Calderbank and Mr M Lawther.

2513 Chair's and Clerk's Announcements

The Chair welcomed the return to duties of the Corporation Clerk, Ms P Schweitzer. All members echoed these sentiments and expressed pleasure about Ms Schweitzer's return from sick leave.

The Chair also thanked Mr K Scribbins for his work as Interim Clerk. These thanks were also shared widely.

Ms J Edgecombe, a student on work experience, was welcomed as an observer.

The Clerk reported that the tenure of Mr M Craft had come to an end and following consultation with him and the Search Committee, it was recommended that Mr Craft be reappointed for a four year term from the date of this meeting. This proposal was **Agreed**.

2514 Declarations of Interests

There were no new declarations.

2515 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2015 were **Agreed** as a true record and signed by the Chair.

2516 Matters Arising

It was confirmed that the review of the Governors' engagement in Safeguarding would be the subject of a later report to the Corporation.

Part 2 – Items for Decision

2517 Report on Success

Ms Ellis presented a report on success in 2014/15. This took the form of a slide presentation. A copy of this presentation is appended to the file copy of these minutes. A number of points were clarified in the presentation:

- The new terminology in relation to success rates included 'Headline Highlights'.
- The emphasis on 'timelines', (eg within three months of the normal end date) was significant.
- The character and reasons for failure to complete on time.
- The significance of the IBM cohort results to the overall success picture.
- The gap in apprenticeship figures and reasons for it.

A number of themes were discussed by members, including the IBM position (a trailblazer which has caused considerable difficulty). The situation of franchising, generally, and the need to reduce reliance on it was also discussed. It was felt that in relation to IBM all possible steps had been taken by the College in a prudent and timely manner.

The report and the slides including the conclusions reached therein were **Endorsed** by the Corporation.

2518 Risk Management Action Plan and Monitoring 2015

Satwant Deol introduced her monitoring report and action plan. Members were informed that the Audit Committee had also received the report and had endorsed its findings. (The report is summarised in Minute 807 of the Audit Committee meeting held on 7 March 2016 – these minutes were before the Corporation). Additional points raised by members of the Corporation were:

- The debt in relation to the Nigeria work and steps being taken in relation to it
- The increase in the number of high risk operations and ameliorations – the improvement in some risk areas is signalled in the Paper on Quality (also before the Corporation)
- The need for the Corporation to focus on a small number of strategic risks, assuming the Audit Committee focuses on all risks.
- Amongst the highest risks were recruitment and funding.

Finally, the Corporation **Noted** the progress made in the management of risks and **Concluded** that the College had a strong approach to risk management which supported the achievement of the College's strategic objectives.

Part 3 – Items for Discussion

2519 Quality Report

Liz Davies introduced her report which reviewed quality assurance at the College for 2015/16 to date. The report focused on Operational Targets for Quality 2016. The objectives behind the targets, eight in total, ranged from high success rates in all subject areas, to the effectiveness of assessment to self-assessment and quality assurance structures.

The report set out a large number of tables showing statistics on items like retention, student progress and student evaluation and complaints.

The conclusions included:

- Improvement in in-year retention
- Increased satisfaction rates
- Fewer complaints
- Overall, progress against targets was thought to be good.

Members discussed the observation process and changes in it, learning walks and responsiveness to student comments. Improvements in the speed and success of interventions were thought to be very marked.

There were some problems in the labour market causing the poaching of staff who sometimes did not complete their notice period. All steps were being taken to mitigate the effects of high staff turnover, where this occurred.

The Corporation **Noted** the progress made in respect of 2016 Operational Targets for Quality and congratulated the staff involved.

2520 Health and Safety Annual Report

Barbara Green introduced the annual report. Overall it showed good progress in maintaining high standards of health and safety at the College.

The report outlined the management of health and safety in the College (using principles from the Health and Safety Executive Management Standard) and referred to key issues which warranted the attention of the Corporation.

These issues covered:

- Audits and Reviews 2014/15
- Risk Assessments
- Work Placements and Employer Assessments
- Educational Offsite Activities and International visits
- Students – Safe at College
- Fire Safety
- Well-being
- Training
- Accidents
- Emergency Planning

The main conclusions covered improved audit changes, staff working well in relation to risk assessments, the significance of work placements, the need for improved student inductions and improved work place survey results.

Concern was also expressed at the increase in student accidents (especially at Northharbour) and steps being taken in relation to this were described.

Overall, the Corporation **Noted** all the work being done in relation to health and safety to maintain and develop high standards and **Endorsed** the action being taken.

2521 Principal's Report

The Principal's report covered, first, news relating to Highbury, (apprenticeships, student success, Investors in People – Gold Award, Matrix accreditation, TES Award shortlist, staff success, Digital Maths Academy and World Skills). The report went on to deal with Portsmouth and Solent News (the Area Review – see later item – the New Theatre Royal Partnership). National news covered apprenticeships and the AoC Guide on New Structures. International news covered India and Nigeria. Finally, a section on student recruitment covered in-bound student recruitment and university partnership agreements.

A letter from Sajid Javid, MP, and Jo Johnston, MP, relating to the Principal's visit to India was appended to her report.

Members welcomed the report and congratulated the Principal and staff and students on the extent and depth of the action reported in it. Comment was made on the impact of the College locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. The Investors in People achievements, the range of partnerships, the prizes and accreditations all received congratulatory comments from governors. Governors looked forward to further reports including one on progress with work in India. The report was **Noted** and the action taken was **Endorsed**.

2522 Governor Link Scheme

A brief review was made of the scheme and the visits planned under it. The allocation of governors to key areas and the visit plans were **Noted** and the action was **Endorsed**.

2523 Minutes / Reports of Committees

The following minutes/reports were **Received** for information and the decisions reached were **Endorsed**.

- Audit Committee 8 March 2016
- Finance Committee 9 February 2016
- Search (oral report) 22 March 2016
- The confidential minutes of the Finance Committee 9 February 2016 and 16 February 2016

Date of Next meeting

Tuesday 5 July 2016 at 5.00 pm

Meeting Evaluation

Of the ten evaluation reports received nine marked all the evaluative questions with a 'yes'. One member felt that the papers had not been received in time and that they could be clearer. Also, the same member felt there could be more 'challenge and support'. One member felt the success rate slides should have been tabled in hard copy format. One member suggested greater strategic clarity in some reports and, also, called for reports on HR and related matters.