

Minutes of the Corporation held on 17th December 2018 5:30pm
Boardroom, Cambridge Campus
Cambridge Regional College

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Present Vernice Key, Chair
 Heather Du Quesnay
 Mark Robertson,
 Principal
 Nichola Harrison
 Tim Arthur
 Raj Kumar
 Barry Fyfield
 Martin Clapson
 Paul Gaudin
 Jo Lancaster
 Judith Coplowe
 Martin Doel
 Terry Butcher
 Lewis Beddow
 Joseph Winters
 Nauris Kalnins

In attendance Michelle Dowse, Derek Sharp, Laura Kerry, Marcus Doyle, Trudie McGuinness,

Clerk Emily Baldwin

1. Introduction		
1.1 1.2	Declarations of Interest Apologies for absence	Apologies were received from A Jennings and M Cole. Lewis Beddow (Staff Governor) was warmly welcomed to the meeting as a new Corporation member.
1.3	Minutes of the meeting held on 27 th September 2018	The minutes of the meeting were agreed to be a true record and signed by the Chair. Governors noted the paper on spending plans for a budget surplus, which would be referred to later in the meeting. L Kerry confirmed that key worker housing was available to staff members. She agreed to circulate details to Governors by email.

1.4	Governor feedback	<p>Governors gave feedback on their link visits and visits to the College.</p> <p>B Fyfield confirmed that he had visited iMET, along with Staff Governor Terry Butcher. He also had attended a link meeting with the Supported Learning team where the discussion had focused on the substantial increase in the number of supported learners at the Cambridge campus and the progress made in ensuring a common curriculum was in place across the campuses. The Principal confirmed that there had been a substantial increase in numbers, with students coming from 6 different authorities all with their own requirements. The administrative overhead in supporting the learners and managing their exam requirements was substantial. B Fyfield had attended the SAR for Supported Learning where he had been assured by the level of challenge from management. Governors asked if there were other local options for students with learning difficulties. The Principal confirmed that there were local schools that could support them, but in many cases the College was their first choice.</p> <p>N Harrison had attended the SAR meeting for Student Services. She agreed there was substantial challenge from management. She had also attended a link meeting with Emily Bennett, and had been impressed by Emily's level of competence and enthusiasm in the role.</p> <p><i>J Lancaster joined the meeting.</i></p> <p>H Du Quesnay had attended the SAR for Creative Industries and had found it to be a lively and vigorous meeting.</p> <p>J Coplowe had attended a link meeting on English and Maths, and had noted the substantial increase in the number of students undertaking maths qualifications. She had seen the new classrooms for maths and had been struck by the different approaches to teaching maths within the College.</p> <p>T Arthur had attended a SAR meeting. He had also met with Michelle Dowse to discuss employer engagement strategy and employer feedback. It was noted that a single apprenticeship action plan was being developed to join together quality and delivery with the College's sales strategy.</p> <p>V Key had attended the final SAR validation meeting. She was impressed by the number of Governors that had attended individual SAR meetings, which gave the Governing body assurance that the process was robust and vigorous.</p>
2. Strategic Matters		
2.1	Principal's Report	<p>M Robertson introduced the Principal's Report, which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the completed KPI documents for 2017/18, and the early data for 2018/19. It was noted that the previous three-year targets were proposed prior to merger, and were in need of amendment to respond to performance; it was agreed that the teaching and learning targets for 2018/19 would be reviewed at the next L&Q Committee. • the first progress update of the Strategic Implementation Plan • A summary risk register, which now included a section on risks of key concern. It was noted that some risks would inevitably be red (such as financial risks); it was important to retain them on the register to ensure

		<p>there were appropriate mitigating actions in place, but attention was particularly drawn to those risks of key concern.</p> <p>The Principal drew attention to two areas in the Strategic Implementation Plan that were red:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security issues which were not addressing low level behavioural issues such as littering in Cambridge. A review was scheduled for early 2019. Governors agreed that this issue should be separated out from broader security issues regarding the safety of students, which were being addressed through lock-down practices. It was noted that the Student Liaison Committee had been consulted on security and behavioural issues. Governors asked for a security strategy to be circulated to Governors by email. • Appraisal completion, which were behind target, and individual managers were being actively followed up. <p>Governors commended the KPI report. They queried whether there was a danger of duplication between the different reports. It was noted that there was correlation between the reports, but that the risk register served a different purpose.</p> <p>Governors asked if there were any residual issues regarding the merger. T Arthur confirmed that F&R Committee had reviewed a close down report on the merger.</p> <p>P Gaudin said it was important to acknowledge the achievements of the College, and the amount of hard work that had been undertaken. It was noted that the College had been awarded the Investors in People Gold Award which was a substantial achievement.</p> <p>The Principal drew attention to the achievement of positive value added in 2017/18 for Level 2 and for Level 3 1 year courses. This was difficult to achieve and demonstrated real improvement in this area, affecting over 1000 students. M Doel confirmed that value-added was very difficult to evaluate in the FE sector due to the number of students changing subjects between school and College.</p> <p>English and Maths remained a priority, and the results were disappointing compared to the previous year. However, the College's progress scores remained higher than the national average and within Cambridgeshire.</p> <p>Governors discussed the internal auditor recommendation that the red/amber/green scoring on the KPIs should be in accordance with set criteria. Governors agreed that it was appropriate that SMT continued to use their judgement in setting the RAG ratings, but that this should be in accordance with stated criteria and exceptions reported.</p> <p>Governors received the Principal's Report.</p>
2.2	Self Assessment Report (SAR) Performance 2017/18	<p>M Doyle introduced the Self-Assessment Report (SAR) for 2017/18.</p> <p>The College was required to produce a SAR annually which was sent to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). The College's SAR was structured in line with the criteria of the Ofsted Inspection Framework. In the period since the draft SAR was distributed to Governors, the SAR had been subject to</p>

validation at a meeting on 12th December 2018 to which the Chair of Corporation attended.

The CRC SAR was graded at Grade 2 for all types of provision, with the exception of Apprenticeships which was awarded a Grade 3.

Strengths included clarity of vision, governance, pace of harmonisation, the VLE, safeguarding arrangements, overall achievement rates, employer engagement, HE destinations, 14-16 year old progress, high quality work experience and strong Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG).

Areas for improvement included apprenticeship delivery management, English and Maths, destination tracking at Huntingdon, attendance levels, group tutorials, support for students with disabilities at high levels and variable achievement rates on some courses.

M Doel commented that the improvement at Huntingdon was very impressive, particularly as it seemed not to have affected outcomes at Cambridge.

B Fyfield asked whether having two campuses meant it was easier to cover staff absences. L Kerry said this was not necessarily the case due to the distance between the campuses, but it was possible for longer-term leaves. Learning support mentors were sufficiently flexible to cover both campuses. Both campuses had benefitted from the sharing of best practice between the campuses.

H Du Quesnay noted that attendance remained an issue and asked for assurance that it was going to improve. M Doyle explained that there was a focus on this, and measures such as the move away from progression coaches and training of tutors would help. There was also better use of Pro-Monitor and a new disciplinary procedure for students in place. The Student Governor confirmed that students were contacted if they were absent, although this was less effective for English and Maths attendance.

It was noted that the number of leavers in the SAR referenced the number of qualifications, not individual students.

Overall, Governors agreed that the SAR showed the College was fully aware of its strengths and weaknesses. They asked for clarification on when the Principal felt progress would be made in seeing some of the key areas assessed as outstanding. The Principal confirmed that the SAR was realistic in the year post-merger. He was confident that if the College could maintain good improvement in success rates, particularly in apprenticeships, then it was possible that the College could secure 1 grades for Leadership and Management, and Personal development, behaviour and welfare in the near future.

An external validator had not been available for the SAR panel, but the College was instead going to have an external review as part of a mock Ofsted inspection in the new year.

Governors **approved** the SAR for 2017/18.

<p>2.3</p>	<p>CRC Financial Statements 2017/18</p>	<p>D Sharp introduced the Financial Statements for 2017/18.</p> <p>The Finance & Resources Committee had reviewed the Financial Statements on 27th November 2018 from a financial context.</p> <p>The Audit & Risk Committee had reviewed the Financial Statements and Regularity Report on 6th December 2018.</p> <p>From a statutory accounts perspective the results were in-line with that forecast for the College outturn. The College has prepared the Statutory Accounts based on merger accounting principles such that prior year figures were presented as if Cambridge Regional College and Huntingdon Regional College had been merged at that time.</p> <p>The financial aim for CRC for 2017/18 had been to deliver an underlying operating surplus of £752k (£152k after including £600k restructuring costs). There were financial challenges in the year, particularly in relation to the apprenticeship delivery following the failure of the sub-contractor Decorus and a national slow take-up of apprenticeships after the introduction of the levy. The College had originally planned to deliver less than the full allocation for Adult Education Budget, however it had delivered the full allocation to offset this income loss.</p> <p>The final result before FRS102 pension adjustments and redundancy was a surplus of £758k which was marginally in excess of target of £752k. After taking into account increased restructuring costs, the College achieved a surplus of £95k, against an original budget of £152k.</p> <p>The external auditors had given a clean audit report, with no significant findings.</p> <p>M Doel asked that there be a standing item on the Corporation agenda to report on iMET. In his view, iMET may require more investment at the start-up stage.</p> <p>Governors asked for clarification on the performance of the College's international business. T McGuinness confirmed that the income target had been met.</p> <p>In terms of apprenticeship funding, key growth areas were in construction and engineering, but it was very difficult to recruit staff in those areas. There was a CITB fund to entice people into construction. The College was looking at more flexible delivery and using headhunting techniques to secure staff in key areas. Governors stressed the importance of managing employer and student expectations if the College did not have capacity to deliver.</p> <p>Governors asked about progress in 18/19 for apprenticeship recruitment. The College had recruited 300 apprentices which was below target. SMT were confident the target would be met due to the different start times for apprentices that were now at three points in the year.</p> <p>Governors asked about corporate sponsorship and whether this was possible to help with salaries in difficult to recruit areas. It was agreed that it was important to get forums of employers together to help work together to solve the problem. Pay uplifts could be a problem for other members of staff who worked alongside those that have received an exceptional pay uplift. Governors asked whether the Combined Authority could take a role in assessing the cost to the economy of not</p>
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		<p>appropriately paying staff. It was noted that the AOC took a role in lobbying government.</p> <p>Governors advised SMT to consider options for a commercial arm, so the College could have a different proposition for staff.</p> <p>Governors approved the Group Report and Financial Statements for CRC, and agreed that the Chair of Governors could sign the Letters of Representation and the Regularity Self-Assessment Report.</p>
2.4	Safeguarding Report 2017/18	<p>T McGuinness introduced the annual safeguarding report.</p> <p>The report was intended to give an overview of safeguarding operations during 2017/18 in order to give the Corporation confidence that the college was compliant with its statutory safeguarding duties, including the Prevent duty.</p> <p>The College's safeguarding policy had been updated to take account of the new Keeping Children Safe in Education changes which came into effect from 3rd September 2018.</p> <p>There had been 550 referrals to the College safeguarding team in 2017/18. This represented a marginal decrease in referrals, but there had been an increase in the number of referrals to the wellbeing team which was more appropriate. There were no issues with gender balance. Students with a disability, including those with an autism spectrum disorder, were highly represented. It was important that staff in those affected areas were appropriately trained. The biggest issue for the College was the rise in serious mental health issues, and more resources were being put into this area, particularly around suicide prevention. The College was also investing in training in mental health first aid, which may become a requirement in the future.</p> <p>Governors expressed concern about the number of serious mental health issues, which they understood represented a national trend. They asked about the College's working relationships with the NHS. T McGuinness confirmed that the College had very strong relationships with the NHS and other appropriate agencies, such as the police and youth offending agency. She also confirmed that many of the cases stemmed from issues outside the College, rather than being issues from the College itself.</p> <p><i>J Lancaster left the meeting.</i></p> <p>Governors asked how the College compared to other colleges. T McGuinness said that the College was in line with national trends, but would ask other colleges informally if they had information they would be willing to share.</p> <p>Governors asked whether individual cases were tracked to see how College intervention had made a difference. There were questions about confidentiality that needed to be adhered to, although trends were monitored. The College had a good record of retention of looked after children.</p> <p>It was noted that the College currently only tracked the primary issue for referral but that there were usually a combination of issues. A new software system would be able to look at a combination of issues in more detail. P Gaudin offered to meet with T McGuinness outside the meeting to share his experience in this area.</p>

		<p>Governors asked to see further information in the future on links between safeguarding and student behaviour where bullying was an issue. It was noted that this issue had already been raised at the L&Q Committee meeting.</p> <p>Governors asked about the issues around Prevent and noted that current cases tended to be linked to right-wing extremism.</p> <p>Governors asked about how staff with mental health issues were supported. The HR department was involved when it involved a staff member being signed off work. In such cases, the College made use of occupational health process and referred staff to a counselling service. The College had a new wellbeing strategy in place.</p> <p>Governors received the report and approved the revised safeguarding policy.</p> <p><i>T McGuinness left the meeting.</i></p>
2.5	Annual review of complaints and compliments	<p>M Doyle introduced the Annual Review of Complaints and Compliments for Cambridge Regional College.</p> <p>There were 98 formal complaints in 2017/18, of which 40 complaints were upheld. There were 112 compliments logged by the Quality team.</p> <p>Governors asked whether appropriate remedial action had been taken in light of complaints which were upheld. It was noted that this was the case, and that action plans were put in place where appropriate. It was also noted that complaints were not the only source of information for SMT on areas that needed improvement, which were integrated into the College's Quality Improvement Plan.</p> <p>The Chair said that complaints offered Governors an insight into areas of concern. Governors agreed that while there would always be complaints related to individual cases that could have been handled better, it was important for Governors to understand if there were trends in complaints which indicated a broader issue. They expected SMT to alert Governors if this was the case. If there was such a critical issue, it should not wait until an annual report was available.</p> <p>Governors reiterated that it was important that students understood how to make a complaint. The Student Governors agreed that this could be clearer in Student Inductions. Governors noted that there were a variety of mechanisms for students to make sure their voice was heard, including through the Student Liaison Committee.</p> <p>Governors received the report.</p>
3. Matters referred from Committees		
3.1	Matters for decision referred from the L&Q Committee	<p>H Du Quesnay updated Governors on the main areas of discussion of the Learning and Quality Committee which had met on the 13th November 2018.</p> <p>She drew attention to the new Careers strategy and it was noted that N Harrison had agreed to be the link Governor for Careers as part of her role as Link Governor for Student Support Services.</p>

		<p>She also drew attention to the recent Learners' satisfaction survey, which showed some declining scores on the Cambridge campus.</p> <p>The Committee had discussed the English and Maths action plan in detail, which showed a committed response from the College in striving to improve outcomes in this area. The most recent results had been disappointing, particularly in Maths. The Committee had scrutinised and challenged management on the reasons for this, and were confident that the Action Plan was addressing ways to bring about improvements. Attendance in English and Maths remained an issue, as did the recruitment and retention of staff.</p> <p>Governors approved the Careers Strategy.</p>
3.2	Matters for decision referred from the F&R Committee	<p>T Arthur updated Governors on the main areas of discussion of the Finance & Resources Committee which had met on the 27th November 2018.</p> <p>T Arthur drew attention to the College's improved financial performance, which indicated a substantial turnaround from previous years. He asked for suggestions from Governors on spending priorities for the College in the event that the College exceeded its financial target in 2018/19. Suggestions included increased spending on iMET and climate change measures.</p> <p>T Arthur drew attention to the HR Annual Report, and commended the College on its progress with contract harmonisation.</p> <p>Governors approved the Health and Safety Policy and the Annual Health and Safety Annual Report.</p>
3.3	Matters for decision referred from the Audit & Risk Committee	<p>E Baldwin updated Governors on the main areas of discussion of the Audit and Risk Committee which had met on 6th December 2018.</p> <p>The Committee had received an update on the College's GDPR arrangements and were assured that the College's policies and procedures were in place.</p> <p>The Committee had approved the College's anti-slavery statement.</p> <p>The Committee had discussed the internal audit plan for 2018/19 and had agreed to postpone the planned audit on marketing and instead bring forward the audit on curriculum planning. This was based on an assessment of the College's risks and priorities.</p> <p>Governors approved the anti-slavery statement</p>
4. Final matters		
4.1	Matters agreed between meetings	<p>Corporation noted the items that had been agreed electronically since the last meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The HE assurance statement • Remuneration Committee recommendation • Staff Bonus Payment

4.2	Confidential Minutes	<p><i>Student governors and staff governors left the meeting.</i></p> <p>Governors noted and approved the</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • confidential minutes of the Remuneration Committee meetings held on 10th October and 13th November 2018 • the Remuneration Committee's Terms of Reference and amended Policy for the Remuneration of Senior Postholders. • confidential minutes of the F&R Committee meeting held on 27th November 2018 <p>The discussion is minuted separately.</p>
4.3	Self-assessment of Governors' Performance	<p>Governors noted the considerable amount of papers for the meeting which had included the Financial Statements and the full SAR. They asked the Clerk to consider how to streamline papers in the future. It was suggested that the full SAR be made available on the portal in the future, with the summary in the pack of papers. It was also suggested that Committee papers (except for minutes and cover note) not be included in the pack, except in exceptional circumstances.</p> <p>Governors also said that the cover paper for reports needed to focus on the main issues that needed to be considered, rather than just an executive summary of the paper.</p>

Summary of Actions

Actions				
	Item	Action	Lead	Date
1.4	Matters arising	L Kerry confirmed that key worker housing was available to staff members. She agreed to circulate details to Governors by email.	L Kerry	Jan 2019
2.1	Principal's Report	It was agreed that the teaching and learning targets for 2018/19 would be reviewed at the next L&Q Committee.	M Robertson/M Doyle	Mar 2019
		Governors asked for a security strategy to be circulated to Governors by email.	M Robertson	Feb 2019
2.3	CRC Financial Statements 2017/18	M Doel asked that there be a standing item on the agenda on iMET	E Baldwin	Jan 2019
		Governors advised SMT to consider options for a commercial arm, so the College could have a different proposition for staff.	SMT	Mar 2019
2.4	Safeguarding Report 2017/18	P Gaudin offered to meet with T McGuinness outside the meeting to share his experience in this area.	T McGuinness	Jan 2019
4.3	Self-assessment of Governors' Performance	They asked the Clerk to consider how to streamline papers in the future.		

There was no other business and the meeting ended at 8:00pm.

Signed

Chair