

Doc No Corp 12/14-4

Agenda item 6

CORPORATION

DATE: WEDNESDAY 8 OCTOBER 2014

PLACE: RM H002 MERTON CAMPUS

TIME: 5.00pm.

PRESENT: Godfrey Allen (Chair), Sue Rimmer (Principal & Chief Executive), Daud Ilyas, Lucy Ashman, Michael Helene (Part 2), Yvette Stanley, Cllr Stuart Thom, Cllr Brenda Fraser, Karen Fullman (Part 2), Ross Maloney, Jonathan Hick.

IN ATTENDANCE Chris Wright (Vice Principal Planning & Resources)
Bev Giarraputo (Vice Principal Curriculum & Merton)
Sarah Horrell (Vice Principal Employer & Community Engagement)
Julian Grindell (Interim Vice Principal Planning & Resources)
Ralph Moran (Director of Finance)
Natalie Watt (Clerk to the Corporation)

1. Apologies for Absence

Cllr Jim Maddan, Paul Robinson, Russell Pocock, Andrew Brown, Kazi Hossain, Sandra Edmund.

2. Declarations of Interest

- Noted that Julian Grindell Interim VP Special Projects is also employed as a consultant for FUSION.

PART TWO

3. Minutes of the meeting held on:

- i) Minutes of the Corporation meeting held on 15th July 2014 – **APPROVED.**
- ii) Confidential Minutes of the meeting held on the 15th July 2014 – **APPROVED.**

4. Matters Arising

5. Chairs Action/External Meetings – Presented by the Clerk

Items discussed:

- Members were advised that the Chair attended the following events:
 - The AoC Annual General Meeting attended.
 - The AoC Governors Council attended.
 - AoC Regional Seminar attended

HSBC

- The Director of Finance requested that the Chair on behalf of the Corporation authorise the opening of a College Bank Account at the nearest branch of the HSBC to the main Wandsworth campus. The Agreement was signed just prior to the meeting and the details reported to the Corporation who **APPROVED** the Chairs action.

6. **Strategic Options update - CONFIDENTIAL– Presented by the principal & Chief Executive**

- Subject to a separate confidential minute.

7. **Principal & Chief Executives Termly Report – Presented by the Principal.** Items discussed:

- The Principal updated Members on the start of term and in particular on the successful implementation of the 6 week Induction period which had led to a smooth start to the academic year for students.
- Member's attention was drawn to paragraph 2 of the report and the student news in paragraph 3. Discussion followed on levels of attendance.
- Members were informed that the College currently had 85% attendance and that a target of 90% had been set. Noted that a cross college strategy was in place to ensure continued focus on attendance to meet the target.
- Members noted that QAA would be visiting the College in November 2014.
- Members discussed the funding update in detail and noted the impact of lagged funding.
- Discussion followed on Franchise partners and the flexibility offered by these arrangements against the risks.
- Members queried retention levels and were informed that it was too early in the term to provide reliable data on this and that an update would be provided after the 42 day period to the next Corporation meeting. Noted.
- Members noted the recruitment update on page 3 and discussion followed on apprenticeships in place.
- Members identified the new building site at the Rams Brewery in Wandsworth and the College confirmed it was engaged with the Council to try and explore opportunities.
- Members noted the planned increase identified for January and queried the potential success of this? The VP Planning and Resources confirmed that these were reliable estimates as the Princes Trust, which the College very successfully delivered undertook January starts.
- Discussion and debate followed on the impact of January enrolments. The VP Planning and Resources confirmed that whilst there is a conscious drive to continue to increase growth during the year that it is unlikely that January enrolments will significantly alter the funding picture.
- The Principal informed Members that a detailed presentation on the last years success rates and areas of concern would be provided to the next meeting of the Quality and Performance Committee.
- Members noted the update on study programmes, Teaching Learning

**VP Planning
& Resources**

**VP Planning
& Resources**

and Assessment, HE and Professional and Quality Improvement.

- Members discussed at length the key impact of Maths and English requirements.
- Members noted that the areas identified in the Funding section at paragraphs 9,10 and 11 had all missed recruitment targets.
- Members raised concerns about the target setting process and queried whether these were too challenging. The Principal discussed the processes in place to enable management to test the validity of the reported information.
- Members discussed the challenges of being a London College in terms of close competition. Feedback indicated that employers were more aware of the scope of provision than prospective students.
- Members discussed at length the quality assurance information and expressed disappointment at the outcome of the AS levels. The Principal discussed in detail the work that had been undertaken to identify and resolve the issues.
- Members discussed the Colleges relationship with other 6th forms in the area and the possibility of peer review. The VP Curriculum and Quality confirmed that peer discussions had been held with the Harris Academy.
- Debate took place on the future challenges facing the College whilst retaining the 6th Form provision.
- Members discussed the update on page 7 and it was noted that the College was working hard to increase income and recruitment.
- Members noted the proposed audit of the whole student experience and it was agreed that feedback would be provided at a later date.
- Destinations of A level students were discussed in detail.
- Members confirmed that School sixth forms were also having the same debates about UCAS pupils who failed to achieve top grades.
- The Principal confirmed that the new teaching, learning and assessment strategy had been rolled out.
- The Principal confirmed that Sami Hedhli was the lead on Study Programmes and that he would be bringing a report to the Q&P Committee on progress to date later this term.
- Members noted the staffing changes identified. Members also noted that the College was entering in to a new arrangement with Northampton University.
- Members noted the update on page 8 and the continuing difficulty in appointing a permanent Health and Safety Office for the College.
- The Principal informed Members that a potential strike date had been called for the 14th October 2014 but this was subject to a high court challenge so may not proceed. Noted.

Report RECEIVED.

**Interim VP
Curriculum &
Quality**

Principal

8. Management Accounts – Presented by the Director of Finance.

Items discussed:

- Members noted the provisional out turn deficit of £777k inclusive of FRS17 costs.
- Following discussion about FRS17 the Director of Finance confirmed that the College was forecasting a surplus of £6k excluding FRS17 costs.
- Discussion followed on the loan covenants in place and Members were assured there was no breach.

- Members also noted the significant savings achieved in year on staff costs. Discussion followed on the un-predictability of Franchise income.
- Members noted the strong balance sheet and that the pay ratio remained under 65%.
- Members were informed that the College expected to be notified that its Financial Health category would be reduced from outstanding to good. Noted.
- Discussion followed on the level of visiting teachers employed and the use of agency staff.
- The Director of Finance confirmed that these areas of staffing were monitored regularly by the Senior Leadership Team.
- Members were informed that late submission of invoices by VT's continued to be an issue but was being increasingly robustly managed.
- Discussion followed on staffing structures and the types of contract used by the College.

Management Accounts RECEIVED.

9. Capital Projects and Estates Update – Presented by the Interim VP

Special Projects.

Items discussed:

- Members noted the key points identified in the report, including the successful completion of the refectory project on time and in budget. Members were informed that planning permission for the Tower Block was out for consultation and a submission would be considered in December 2014. Noted.
- Discussion followed on expected and potential receipts and the flexibility of the current market.
- Members discussed the works planned for the construction area and the proposed additional allocation of £480k capital funding for the new construction and engineering facility at Merton and the need for an Easter start date.
- It was agreed that the additional funding would be approved. Members also confirmed delegation to the Principal for the final agreement of the contract sum up to a maximum of £3.4million.
- It was also agreed that an update would be provided to the next meeting regarding this contract.
- Members discussed and noted the submission of an expression of interest for grant support towards future proposed projects i.e. construction and confirmed their support for the submission.
- Members discussed the resulting capital receipts for the sale of the Tower Block and considerable debate took place on the need for investments nodes to be developed to work towards achieving bigger and more significant growth to offset year on year reductions in funding.

Report RECEIVED and recommendations APPROVED.

10. Risk Management – Presented by the Director of Finance.

Items discussed:

- The Director of Finance discussed the new more robust approach to developing controls to mitigate identified risks.
- Members were informed that the College was undertaking assurance

**Interim VP
Special
Projects**

mapping across the College during the course of the year.

Report RECEIVED.

11. Stakeholders Dinner – Presented by the VP Employer and Community Engagement.

Items discussed:

- Members were informed that invitations were being sent out and that a total of 64 guest places were available.
- The start time would be 6.30 for sit down at 7pm. Members were informed that the College was sourcing a VIP speaker and that this would be confirmed once a name was secured.
- The Principal confirmed that the music and food would be provided by College students.

Members noted the update and RECEIVED the report.

12. Stakeholder Engagement Strategy – Presented by the VP Employer and Community Engagement.

Items discussed:

- Members were informed that the strategy had been based on the AoC model from the Association of Colleges and that the College had taken on board the public values statement and the new strategic plan.
- Members were informed that there were a series of underpinning actions in place to deliver the strategy.
- Members challenged the report and queried how the College would judge its performance in terms of delivering the strategy?
- Members asked for details of any benchmark information in the sector relating to the delivery of the stakeholders engagement strategy.
- The VP confirmed that the College was benchmarking where possible but that no specific targets had been set for the delivery.
- Members requested that targets and actions were planned to ensure a successful implementation and delivery of the strategy. Noted
- Members reiterated the need for the College to measure performance in this area.
- Members discussed the employer and community forums they were aware of such as MOAT (a housing association which delivers in the Mitcham area).
- It was agreed that performance targets would be meaningful and signposted for comparison against other Colleges. It was agreed that an update on delivery would come back to a later meeting.

Report RECEIVED.

**VP Employer
and
Community
Engagement**

13. Governors Attendance 2013/14 & Objectives 2014/15 – Presented by the Clerk to the Corporation.

Items discussed:

- Members noted the breakdown of attendance for Committees and the Corporation.
- The Clerk confirmed that full Governor attendance figures were published with the Financial Statements.
- Members noted and approved the proposed attendance objectives for the coming year.

Report and Attendance Objectives APPROVED.

14. **Re-appointment** – Presented by the Clerk to the Corporation.
Items discussed:
- Members were referred to the report circulated with the papers. The Chair of the Audit Committee and the Chair of the Corporation endorsed the recommendation of the Chair of the Search and Governance Committee.
- Mr Tim Morris was APPROVED for re-appointment to a further 3 year term of office as an external co-opted governor on the Audit Committee.**
15. **Any Other Business**
Tooting Campus – Cooling Solution Capital Funding – Presented by the Director of Finance
- Members were advised of the update and overview of the issue at Tooting summarised on the paper Corp 10/14-11.
 - Members queried the continued the lease in place at Tooting and the level of usage.
 - Discussion followed on the business reasons for continued occupancy.
- Members APPROVED an increase in the College Capital Expenditure budget of £160k to fund the installation of enhanced cooling at the Tooting campus.**
16. **Key Dates & Date of next meeting:**
- **Governors Learning Walks – 5th and 6th November 2014**
 - **Stakeholder Dinner – Thursday 27th November 2014**

Signed By: _____

Date: _____