

GRANTHAM COLLEGE

Minutes of a meeting of the **Corporation** held on 9 March 2015 at 1800.

Present	Stewart Boylan	Trudy Brothwell	Graham Burks
	Jayne Harrison	Graham Hayton-Hill	Linda Houtby (Principal)
	Mos Kalbassi (Chairman)	Nick Manoussakis	Peter Mulley
	June Parker	Charly Price-Wallace	Steve Welton
In Attendance	Paul Deane (DP)	Ralph Devereux (Clerk)	Alison Fox
	Fiona Twilley	Linda Wale	
Apologies	Mike Argyle	Kathleen Smith	Mike Williams

32/14 ELIGIBILITY, QUORUM, DECLARATION OF INTERESTS AND APOLOGIES

The apologies were accepted. No notice had been received of any member becoming ineligible to hold office, the meeting was quorate and no interests had been declared.

33/14 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING AND REQUESTS FOR URGENT BUSINESS

- a. The minutes of the corporation meeting held on 8 December 2014 were then confirmed and signed.
- b. It was agreed to consider non-contentious governance matters as urgent business.

34/14 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising.

35/14 MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

- a. Finance Committee (FC) (19 January 2015). The FC minutes from the meeting held on 19 January were received with no comment or questions.
- b. Standards Committee (StC) (19 January 2015). The StC minutes from the meeting held on 19 January were received with no comment or questions.

The minutes were received and noted.

36/14 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The Report was designed to update on issues not on the agenda.

- a. Success. Members welcomed the award of the Gold Career Award and congratulations were recorded to Carol Dyer for her commitment and dedication which had largely contributed to the success. A successful Industry day had been held on 3 March involving over 40 employers. Planned press coverage of 6 fairly eventful events and involvement of students in the local community was also welcomed.
- b. International. The DP would be revisiting Qingdao, China in late March on a British Council/AoC funded visit to renew contact with Mr Zhang the Head of the local College and there were hopes for a future relationship; the visit was approved. Fifteen senior staff from South African Vocational Colleges visited as part of an EMFEC/ABC relationship building opportunity and mutual exchange visits between a staff member from Maluti College with a return from Grantham was planned. The partner Swedish college had also sent a party of staff and students.
- c. Prevent. It was important that members were aware that there were sound procedures and processes to implement the recently introduced "Prevent Strategy" which was designed to:
 - (i) respond to the ideological challenge from terrorism and extremism;

- (ii) minimize the threat from those who promote these views;
- (iii) provide practical help to prevent students from being drawn into terrorism and ensure they are given appropriate advice and support; and
- (iv) work with a wide range of sectors (including education, criminal justice, faith, charities, online and health) where there are radicalization risks.

The strategy covered all forms of terrorism, including far right extremism including aspects of non-violent extremism. Processes designed to address such issues had been established locally for some years but had been robustly evaluated against all available guidance. Essentially, the process was aimed at identifying those who could become vulnerable. Close links had been established for some time with counter-terrorism police authorities; arrangements were explained and welcomed. The College was fully compliant and members were recommended to take the online training at the link included in the papers.

- d. The EMFEC Conference had recently been held; those who had attended reported their impressions which indicated that it had been both a successful and educational event.
- e. Estates. Outline planning permission for the Masterplan had now been received and the move to reserve matters was imminent, however the LEP was unable to guarantee that the applied for grant would definitely be forthcoming, and necessary expenditure may have to be unilaterally expended; advice was being taken. Gifted land to Highways was now resolved. Keyhams, the contractors on recent projects had entered receivership, there were some issues outstanding but the largest, the boiler, may be replaced under insurance arrangements. The previously informed legal issues continued.

- a. **The information was received and noted.**
- b. **The planned DP visit to China was noted and approved.**

37/14 FINANCE REPORT AND KPI UPDATE (Out of Agenda Order)

- 1. A letter had been received from the SFA confirming that:
 - a. the financial health grade of “Good” had been based on the financial plan but after scrutiny of the audited AFS the Agency had upgraded the assessment to “Outstanding” for 2013.14; and
 - b. similarly the underlying grade of “Satisfactory” had been upgraded to “Good”.
- 2. Finance. The management accounts accurate to 31 January were then electronically presented considered and discussed (Attached to the filed copy of these minutes). The current budgetary situation was favourable by c£347k against budget and whilst income was favourable by c£30k, payroll expenditure was unfavourable by £41k (61% of Income) but non-payroll costs remained favourable by c£418k. The forecast surplus situation was noted. The balance sheet was positive with 58 cash days, a strong cash balance and the CR was 1.4. All FI remained satisfactory and there were no significant aged debtors. Loan covenants were all currently in scope. Notes regarding longer term cash flow forecasts were noted and the report was received.
- 3. KPI. The remainder of the KPIs were noted and it was noted that a letter had been sent to the SFA suggesting that: as delivery of the provision prompting the dip below the standard for type B provision (BDC IT & ESOL) had been discontinued it was unnecessary to launch formal intervention.
- 4. A recent letter had informed that the SFA adult skills allocation would average reductions of c24% in 2015/16 promising challenges ahead. Predictably, sector wide indignation and frustration had emerged following the announcement and there was feeling in the wider FE sector that direct action against the policy was justified; this was then discussed. Positive action was unlikely to have any effect on the outcome and could well result in reputational damage. A more sensible approach was to deal with the situation, protect learners as far as possible and look forward.

The information was received.

38/14 FEEDBACK FROM CHAIRMAN'S MEETINGS (Out of Agenda Order)

The Chairman had held recently held individual meetings with all members when a considerable number of associated issues had been jointly explored. A consolidated, anonymous list of matters that should be brought to the Corporation's attention was circulated (Attached to the filed copy of these minutes). There had been no significant adverse or critical comments rather the overall impression was of a team generally well satisfied with arrangements. Due notice however was taken of helpful suggestions where improvements could be made. All were thanked for their contribution.

The information was received and noted.

39/14 IMPACT ON STUDENTS (Out of Agenda Order)

All considered issues would affect the student body but college success was a positive indicator of morale and commitment and strong concentration on finance would enable retention of focus on the main core business.

40/14 URGENT BUSINESS (Out of Agenda Order)

Governance Documentation. The AoC was currently consulting on a revised English Colleges' Code of Governance; the code was far wider than the existing version. In anticipation of possible Corporation acceptance of the final code, updated job descriptions for the Chairman and Clerk and an outline of responsibilities for Corporation members had been drafted. The IAS would shortly be scrutinising Governance and the opportunity would be taken to validate the drafts as part of the assignment and the recommended versions would be brought for approval.

The information was received.

41/14 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meetings would be:

- a. strategic planning 1800 14 May 2015; and
- b. Corporation meeting 1800 6 July 2015.

Elected Staff and Student Governors left the meeting.

42/14 STRATEGIC PLANNING ITEMS – UPDATE (Confidential Item)