

GRANTHAM COLLEGE

Minutes of a meeting of the **Corporation** held on 7 December 2015 at 1800.

Present	Mike Argyle	Stewart Boylan (Not 30/15)	Marcus O'Callaghan (Not 30/15)
	Graham Hayton-Hill	Linda Houtby (Chief Executive)	Des McHugh
	Mos Kalbassi (Chairman)	Sally Macpherson	June Parker
	Emma McSorley (Not 30/15)	Jake Tongue (Not 30/15)	Steve Welton
In Attendance	Paul Deane (Acting Principal)	Ralph Devereux (Clerk)	Alison Fox (Not 30/15)
	Drew Richardson (Not 30/15)	Claire Temprell (Not 30/15)	Fiona Twilley (Not 30/15)
Apologies	Jayne Harrison	Nick Manoussakis	Wade Rowlett
	Laura Taylor	Mike Williams	

The meeting was preceded by a presentation by Mark Heaton (Area Highways Manager) at SKDC explaining the Land Dedication Scheme and outlining the planned changes to the road layout designed to ease traffic flow and pedestrian safety; a question and answer session concluded the talk. The Chairman thanked Mark for his attendance and for an interesting and informative session.

19/15 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.

20/15 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING AND REQUESTS FOR URGENT BUSINESS

- a. The minutes of the last meeting held on 12 October were confirmed and signed.
- b. The notes of the strategic planning meeting held on the 12 November 2015 were received; these would be discussed by the SLT and, if necessary, taken up as action points.
- c. It was agreed to consider a confidential item of urgent business, staff (Excluding the Chief Executive and Acting Principal) and students would be required to withdraw.

21/15 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising.

22/15 MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

- a. Joint Audit and Finance Committee (AC/FC) (16 November 2015). The Audit and Finance Committees had held a joint meeting to consider, amongst other issues, the Annual Financial Statements 2014/15 and consider the informing documents, all of which were recommended to the Corporation. The outcome would be considered at 25/15.
- b. Standards Committee (StC) (16 November 2015). The minutes were received with no comment or questions however Success Rate and English and Maths (EAM) comments were particularly noted.

The information was received and noted.

23/15 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

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

- a. Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR). The outcome of the CSR had been far less stringent than had been generally predicted, the 5 main issues to arise were clearly detailed in the accompanying paper and were considered individually. Changes to the 2016/17 16-18 funding were now expected for imminent release to be followed by longer term plans in the New Year; some timelines were clear and detailed but further information would be passed to members as it became available. In the context of apprenticeships, it was noted and welcomed that the college remained in the top decile of providers nationwide.
- b. Collaboration. Consultation with Boston and New College Stamford (NCS) continued to progress well, the recent meeting between governors from the 3 colleges and Nick Boles had been successful and the next meeting of the combined steering group would be hosted by Grantham College next week. Members were asked to submit any issues or suggestions to the Chairman for inclusion in the consultations. Information had now been received that the formal Area Based Review (ABR) for Lincolnshire would be towards the end of next year and it was important that some positive proposals were ready for consideration at that time. There had been contacts, to all 3 participants, from colleges further afield however these did not easily fit with the wish to establish a South Lincolnshire alliance, not least since the implications of "Travel to Learn" were more acute in rural when compared with urban areas. Continuance of the consultation was approved. For information, the FE Commissioner's letter on the wider issue of ABR was attached as an Annex.
- c. Estates. The former Internet Café had now been sold (Subject to contract) and completion was expected early in 2016. Formal planning permission had now been granted for Building 20 and it would be necessary to reassure the LEP of preparedness for completion of the planned project. Necessary authority to work with architects to this stage had been successful and an extension and expansion of that authority was discussed, Services required to move the project forward would be for architects, principal designer and project management; an informal framework had been prepared for the considerations and the details were listed in the accompanying paper. After full discussion it was unanimously agreed that, both in terms of Value for Money (VfM) and continuity of advice, RG&P should continue as architects; building services and project management would be considered separately at a future date.
- d. Bank Facility. Lloyds Bank had indicated willingness to provide a facility for the project and had provided details of Pre-Sanction Indicative Terms. The confidential details of the facility were discussed. Continuance of negotiations was agreed with the caveat that changes in position should be reported before agreement.

- a. **The information was received.**
- b. **Consultation between Boston, Grantham and NCS would continue.**
- c. **RG&P would be extended as architects.**
- d. **Bank negotiations were approved for continuance,**

24/15 FINANCE REPORT AND ENROLMENT

The management accounts accurate to 31 October were then considered and discussed. The current budgetary situation was favourable by c£213k against budget; income and expenditure were both also favourable by c£38k and c£175k respectively. Payroll expenditure was well controlled with a positive variance of £78k which was welcomed; non-payroll costs were favourable by c£97k. The balance sheet was positive with 110 cash days, a strong cash balance and the CR was 1.3. All FI remained satisfactory and there were no significant aged debtors. Loan covenants were all currently in scope. The information was noted and the Report was received.

The information was noted and received.

25/15 AUDIT COMMITTEE ISSUES/ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT (AFS) 2014/15

- a. The draft accounts had been considered in detail at a joint meeting of the Audit and Finance Committees held on 16 November (see also 22/15a) and informed by the following Reports to the Corporation:
 - (i) the Audit Committee Annual Report;

- (ii) the Risk Management (RM) Annual Report; and
- (iii) the IAS Annual Report.

The Committee had drawn to the Corporation's attention that the financial outcome for 2014/15 was a larger than expected surplus; thanks had been recorded to all concerned, particularly in the light of the difficulties in the early part of the year. The Committee had been content with the accounts which had then been recommended to the Corporation. The external auditors' report (Audit Completion Document, the Letter of Comment and the Letter of Representation) had also been recommended to the Corporation; it was noted that there had been no material qualifications and only minor adjustments had been required to the accounts. Mitigation of all risks was explained and the information had also been recommended to the Corporation for approval. The Committee took comfort from the positive tone of the Report. Thanks were also recorded to the External Auditors for their professional approach throughout the audit process.

- b. IAS Internal Audit Plan 2015/16. The Committee had also considered the 2015/16 IAS Internal Audit Plan in detail and the consequent recommendation for approval (together with the associated fee) was accepted.
- a. **The information was received.**
 - b. **The AFS 2014/15 and the Regularity Audit and Letter of Representation were approved for signature and submission.**
 - c. **The IAS Plan (and fee) for 2015/16 was approved.**

26/15 SUCCESS RATES 2014/15

Information on current success rate performance and influencing issues had been closely considered by the Standards Committee who had noted that it was not possible to compare with previous years' performance since the criteria had changed to provide information based on "Quality Type". All programmes, including Vocational Curriculum Areas had been considered and the overall trend had been disappointing at an overall 78% with the national average at 83%; rigorous remedial work had been instituted. In order to raise members' awareness of the changed processes, a comprehensive set of Annexes was attached to the Report; it was accepted that the associated data could be seen as daunting but members were encouraged to study the detail outside of the meeting and to contact the acting Principal with queries or requests for clarification. In order to guide such scrutiny a series of "Key Points" had been detailed for Classroom Based, apprentices and non-apprentice WBL. From analysis it was clear that a high proportion of the difficulties was associated with retention rather than achievement and changed and more rigorous processes had been established to provide for early intervention; that was welcomed. It was necessary for Success Rates to improve and assurance that this was a high priority provided some comfort to the Committee. The format of the Report with the helpful key points was appreciated and thanks were recorded to those concerned.

The information was noted and received.

27/15 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY (E&D) ANNUAL REPORT

The annual and comprehensive E&D Report was in two parts (Staff and Students), both elements supplemented by graphical and tabulated detail were welcomed and discussed in detail. Generally, the information was positive with no areas of immediate concern but 3 elements were noted in particular:

- a. staff diversity proportionately exceeded the local population data;
- b. students of FSM appeared to perform less well than their peers; and
- c. white British boys' performance was poor and focus on improvement would be maintained.

These issues were discussed in depth, 48/122 had taken up FSM and the suggestion that the proportion of those entitled which did not take up FSM should be analysed to enable comparison of performance with those that did, was welcomed.

The information was received and noted.

28/15 HEALTH AND SAFETY (HAS) ANNUAL REPORT

The HAS Annual Report was considered and discussed; 3 new policies (Work Placement, Portable Appliance Testing and Environmental) had been administered during the reporting period. Comprehensive detail of the organisation together with current tabulated and graphical data informed considerations and Members took comfort from the positive report which was received.

The information was received.

29/15 SAFEGUARDING POLICY

The Safeguarding Policy had been amended to incorporate revised legislation and requirements including full detail on the "Prevent" initiative. Assurance was given and gave comfort that all necessary requirements were included and remained robust. This important area remained in high focus and confidence checks of staff understanding were regularly completed.

The information was noted and received.

30/15 IMPACT ON STUDENTS

Several issues directly affecting students had been discussed, including planning permission for Building 20, the relatively strong financial position and the sharp focus on improving Success Rates, which were all re-assuring. Uncertainty over future funding however remained of concern.

The information was noted.

Staff (Excluding the Chief Executive and the Acting Principal) and Students left the meeting

31/15 URGENT BUSINESS

There was an item of confidential urgent business.

32/15 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meetings would be:

- a. strategic planning 1800 11 February 2016; and
- b. Corporation meeting 1800 7 March 2016.