

MINUTES

Corporation No 140

Date: *02/10/2018 (Tuesday)*

Time: *18:00–20:00*

Venue: *Bowland Suite*

Committee: *Corporation*

Notes: *Refreshments will be available from 5.30pm*

Present: *Alison Robinson (Principal), Allan Foster (Vice Chairman), Barbara Godby (Co-opted Member), David Hall, Debbie Clayton, Declan Burke, Garry Payne, Gerry Corless, Ian Higginbotham, Jane Booker, John Morphet, Julie Hughes, Martin Smith and Stuart Heys (Chairman)*

Attending: *John Wherry (Deputy Principal), Richard Morris (Deputy Principal) and Steven Downham-Clarke (Vice Principal)*

Clerks: *Ron Matthews (Clerk) and Susan Robinson (Deputy Clerk)*

Apologies: *Irene Ainsworth, Richard Furnival, Richard Hughes and Sydney Barwick*

Public Minutes

| Item number: (and category) | Item description: | |
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| <p>55.18 <i>Decision</i></p> | <p><i>Attendance of Co-opted Members of Committees and College Management</i></p> <p>Standing Order 13 states that:</p> <p><i>As a matter of policy all meetings of the Corporation and its Committees will be held in private. The agendas and minutes and supporting papers of its public business will be made available to the general public.</i></p> <p><i>However:</i></p> <p><i>(a) The Principal shall be authorised to invite members of staff to attend in their employed capacity for both public and confidential business as appropriate and in accordance with Standing Order 25.</i></p> <p><i>(b) The Corporation however, may exclude members of staff from attending any business that it deems necessary.</i></p> <p><i>(c) Attendance by other persons shall be at the discretion of the Corporation following advice from the Principal or Clerk.</i></p> <p>The Corporation does encourage Co-opted Governors to attend and take part in the discussion and debate.</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <p>That Management attend for the public and confidential agenda items.</p> | |
| <p>56.18 <i>Record</i></p> | <p><i>Apologies for Absence</i></p> <p>Apologies for absence had been received from Irene Ainsworth, Richard Hughes, Richard Furnival and Sydney Barwick.</p> <p>Debbie Clayton left the meeting at 7.10pm.</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <p>That the apologies be noted.</p> | |
| <p>57.18 <i>Decision</i></p> | <p><i>Public Minutes of Previous Meeting</i></p> <p>The public minutes of meeting number 139 held on Tuesday 10 July 2018 and published on the Extranet were signed and agreed as a true and correct record of the meeting.</p> | |
| <p>58.18 <i>Record</i></p> | <p><i>Declarations of Interest</i></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest made in respect of items on the public agenda.</p> | |

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| <p>59.18 <i>Information</i></p> | <p><i>The Chairs Opening Remarks</i></p> <p>The Chair welcomed student Governor Declan Burke and Governor John Morphet to the meeting. They were attending their first meeting of the Corporation.</p> <p>Safeguarding training had been presented prior to the meeting and to allow time for questions and discussion had resulted in the corporation meeting starting at the later time of 6.20pm. The Chair acknowledged the useful and informative session delivered by Carole Kirkham who has been acting Safeguard lead in addition to her role as Health & Safety Officer. Nine independent Governors and the Principal attended the training. Training dates with Myerscough Staff would be circulated to those who had been unable to attend.</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <p>That the Chair's Address be received.</p> | |
| <p>60.18 <i>Information</i></p> | <p><i>Correspondence</i></p> <p>Corporation gave consideration to the Correspondence:</p> <p>Letter from the Director of the Further Education Group at the ESFA on the Greater Manchester and Lancashire Area Reviews. Corporation noted the federation between St Mary's College, Cheadle and Marple Sixth Form College and the Hope University of Liverpool. The letter indicated the 'three-way federation will help create stronger and financially resilient Sixth Form Colleges in both Blackburn and Stockport, whilst sustaining A level provision in Blackburn'.</p> <p>Office for Students - Application to Register with the Office for Students. The letter to the Chair of Corporation confirmed that the Office for Students (OfS) has registered Myerscough College in the register of English Higher Education providers. Members noted the responsibility of a provider's governing body to ensure that the provider continues to satisfy all of its ongoing conditions of registration.</p> <p>David Hughes, Chief Executive, Association of Colleges - Membership The AoC letter contained a brief overview of activities over the past year and accompanied the invoice for membership renewal for 2018 / 2019.</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <p>That the items of correspondence be received.</p> | |
| <p>61.18 <i>Decision</i></p> | <p><i>Report of the Students Union (MSU)</i></p> <p>The report provided an overview of the MSU and an update on activity to date which included election of Committees, student voice, community links, charity activities and a timetable of events.</p> | |

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| | <p>The new style report which gave consideration to strengths, areas for improvement and impact was positively received.</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <p>That the MSU Report be received.</p> | |
| <p>62.18 <i>Decision</i></p> | <p><i>Governor Engagement Programme</i></p> <p>Corporation welcomed a review of the Governor Engagement Programme and welcomed the proposed introduction of learning walks.</p> <p>Members noted the documentation provided a measured approach and uniformity with safeguards to support Governors in maintaining a strategic overview.</p> <p>Members who had worked in the Education FE sector shared positive experiences of Governor engagement from a staff perspective.</p> <p>Governor photographs and brief biographies would be added to the website and displayed around College.</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <p>That the report be received and developed as described.</p> | |
| <p>63.18 <i>Decision</i></p> | <p><i>Statutory Risk Register</i></p> <p>Corporation gave consideration to the Key Strategic Risks identified in the Statutory Risk Register.</p> <p>Two new risks had been added to the register:</p> <p>Financial impact of increases in employers pension contributions to either or both of the College's Pensions schemes, being the Teachers Pension Scheme (TPS) or Local Government Pension Scheme (Support staff).</p> <p>To mitigate the risk the college measures course profitability that captures employment costs, including pension, and these will be refreshed when a revised contribution is published to ensure course contribution of 50% is maintained within the curriculum offer.</p> <p>Utilisation of teachers is measured to ensure efficient and equitable workloads and should a need to reduce headcount arise due to reductions in student numbers / course profitability the College has experience of this.</p> <p>AoC briefing confirms that teacher pension scheme costs are expected to rise from 2019</p> <p>Potential Financial impact of Agriculture Bill, that replaces Common Agriculture Policy, post UK leaving European Union.</p> <p>To mitigate the risk of reduced to nil subsidy, College would be reviewing the farming strategy and seeking to adjust farming practices so that College could provide public goods and potentially replace some of the income lost and look at new opportunities in the focus on</p> | |

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| | <p>environmental improvement.</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <p>That the Risk Register Report be received.</p> | |
| <p>64.18 <i>Decision</i></p> | <p><i>Report of the Finance and Resources Committee 18 September 2018</i></p> <p>The Chair of Finance & Resources Committee reported on an extensive debate concerning the variance between projected surplus and outturn which was £436k below forecast.</p> <p>There had been a drop in income and a greater spend in the last quarter partly explained through a larger than anticipated use of subcontractors to deliver Myerscough courses.</p> <p>Investigations were being undertaken to identify where the overspend had occurred and whether this was partly procurement in advance for 2018/2019 or otherwise.</p> <p>Members had discussed concerns over data systems being able to support operational functions and report generation.</p> <p>Corporation thoroughly reviewed and added to the discussions the Finance & Resources Committee had held.</p> <p>Corporation received updates from the Deputy Principal since the meeting had been held which incorporated views around procurement, finance processes and the culture in the College.</p> <p>A meeting was arranged with an IT consultant to look at current systems, how they could be adapted or options for new systems.</p> <p>A date in November was being arranged for a walk through test from RSM auditors to look at gap analysis between good practice in the sector on procurement and the College. A report would provide a map of the step changes required. Management would provide detail on costs, resources and implementation.</p> <p>Governors received assurance that cost free consultancy had been utilised where possible</p> <p>Corporation sought assurance around potential fraudulent activity and requested a sample check and that the risk on fraud be rescored.</p> <p>Corporation noted vacancies within the Finance team presented opportunity for restructure.</p> <p>A breakdown of the overspend would be provided.</p> <p>Corporation concurred with Finance & Resources Committee comments on the Strategic Plan Progress Report 2017/2018 and Strategic Plan Targets for 2018/2019, the Financial Position Statement, Myerscough Ventures Report and Capital Expenditure Reports for the period ended 31 July 2018 and approved the reports.</p> <p>Corporation noted matters for information:</p> <p>Appointment of Chair & Vice Chair - Ian Higginbotham and Martin Smith were re-appointed.</p> <p>Pension Fund Valuation at 31 July 2018 - The figure to report in the accounts for 2017/2018 would be £1.254m a reduction of £48k to the estimate. This accounting adjustment had been made to the final accounts.</p> <p>Statutory Risk Register - the risk for fraudulent activity was being reviewed. A risk in relation to Pension Fund liabilities would be added.</p> | |

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| | <p>Going Concern -Governors had agreed that it was reasonable to prepare the College’s financial statements on a 'Going Concern' basis.</p> <p>Trade Debt Levels - The Committee Chair would meet with the Deputy Principal Finance & Corporate Services to review the reporting of trade debt for mutual benefit of the committee and finance office requirements.</p> <p>Overseas Visits Annual Report for the Year Ended 31 July 2018 - The cost to the college had been £8,228.50 which represented 5% of the total spend on overseas visits.</p> <p>College Value for Money Policy Review - The Committee expressed satisfaction with the report and the actions taken.</p> <p>Self-Assessment of Compliance with the Regularity and Propriety Requirements The Committee had noted the responses to the questionnaire and authorised the Chair and Accounting Officer to sign the document.</p> <p>Chair’s Action – Sub-Contracting Supply Chain Fees and Charges – Policy and Procedure - The Committee had endorsed the Chairs action in ensuring the policy approval was in the allocated time frame.</p> <p>Health and Safety Policy – Review - The policy remained fit for purpose subject to minor changes and was approved.</p> <p>Annual Cycle of Business 2018/2019 - Agreed.</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the capital budget provision outlined in the report for website replacement be re-allocated for part funding of an IT Data system. 2. The Internal Auditors RSM be contracted to investigate procurement within the sector and to advise on best practice. 3. That the regular financial reports, as detailed, be agreed. 4. That the matters for information be received. | |
| <p>65.18 <i>Decision</i></p> | <p><i>Draft Governance Self-Assessment Report 2018</i></p> <p>Corporation gave consideration to the Governance self-assessment report, the results of the actual survey returns and the results of the staff survey on Governance.</p> <p>Corporation noted the proposed Grade was 2 'Good'. The Grade was subject to change following the SAR validation process. The Governance self-assessment will be incorporated into the overall College self-assessment report.</p> <p>The Quality Improvement Plan included reference to visibility of governors through sharing of profiles and more effective Governor Engagement activities with increased Governor participation. Development of twilight sessions to explore areas for improvement would be rolled out over the coming year.</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <p>That the Draft Governance Self-Assessment Report be received.</p> | |

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| <p>66.18 <i>Decision</i></p> | <p><i>Annual Report of Human Resources 2017/2018</i></p> <p>Corporation gave consideration to the Human Resources Annual Report for 2017 / 2018. The report provided an annual summary of matters reported to the Committee throughout the year and included further information and statistics concerning Human Resources over the year.</p> <p>Staff turnover had increased but the level was favourable in terms of benchmarks</p> <p>Corporation noted the strengths, targeted improvements and actions taken.</p> <p>Corporation expressed satisfaction with the report.</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <p>That the Annual Human Resources Report 2017 / 2018 be received.</p> | |
| <p>67.18 <i>Decision</i></p> | <p><i>Annual Report of Health and Safety for 2017/2018</i></p> <p>Corporation gave consideration to the Annual Report on Health and Safety for 2017 / 2018.</p> <p>The report provided assurance that Myerscough College was discharging its duties relating to the health, safety and welfare of its employees, learners and visitors and that appropriate systems were in place to ensure compliance with the Health & Safety at Work Act and associated regulations.</p> <p>Accident rates were slightly higher than in previous years as measured against College's own data but followed traditional patterns with no particular concerns. There had not been any serious accidents in the year. Corporation was informed that an electronic reporting system had just been launched. The system included provision for reporting near misses.</p> <p>Well-Being initiatives continued with activities and services promoted throughout all Centres of the College.</p> <p>Insurance claims were processed and settled as they arose.</p> <p>Members discussed the area health & safety audit initiative and received assurance on the scoring mechanism and decision making concerning the order in which areas would be revisited. Reviews were held with Heads of Areas, action plans were in place and monitored.</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <p>That the Annual Health and Safety Report 2017 / 2018 be received.</p> | |

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| <p>68.18 <i>Decision</i></p> | <p><i>Annual Farm Report for 2017/2018</i></p> <p>Corporation gave consideration to the Annual Farm Report for 2017/2018.</p> <p>Members noted the key strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent use of the farm as a teaching resource by a wide range of students. • Utilisation of technology to drive improvement. • Farm team restructured to improve efficiency. • Promotion of agriculture and the College to a wide range of people and potential future students. <p>The areas for improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall financial performance. • Further improvements to enterprise performance. • Continue cost control measures. <p>Members acknowledged the staffing restructure and the detailed monitoring plan which had been presented to Finance & Resources Committee throughout the year. The plan supported the team in its proactive measures in response to changes arising from livestock performance, animal health matters and weather conditions.</p> <p>Members noted the financial loss but also the improved margins and asked questions to seek clarity and assurance of management around, the staffing restructure, income performance, Food Farming Innovation & Technology Centre income, scope for improved use of the farm and FFIT Centre, industry relevance and reputation.</p> <p>Corporation noted that the Farm had been used as a highly effective teaching resource by a wide range of students from different learning areas. High quality research and student project work had been undertaken. Overall the Farm provided direct benefit to the student learning experience.</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <p>That the Annual Farm Report 2017 / 2018 be received.</p> | |
| <p>69.18 <i>Decision</i></p> | <p><i>Whistleblowing Policy & Procedure Review</i></p> <p>The Clerk updated members on some contact detail changes and an addition which stated: 'Following an initial investigation the Clerk may determine that other avenues are more appropriate. This may be by way of a formal disciplinary investigation and the matter passed to a member of the College Senior Management Team or it may be passed to an outside organisation such as the Police.'</p> <p>The policy would be promoted to Myerscough staff.</p> | |

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| | <p>Consideration of the policy and procedure prompted a discussion on Chair's actions in the absence of a meeting and followed up by retrospective discussion and agreement. The definition and structure was written into the Code of Conduct and standing Orders. The Clerk would report to Audit & Governance Committee on use of Chairs Action which was to be kept to a minimum.</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. That the Whistleblowing Policy & Procedure be agreed.2. That the Clerk report to Audit & Governance Committee on 'Chairs Action'. | |
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