

**CHELMSFORD COLLEGE
BOARD OF THE CORPORATION
07 July 2017**

Draft Minutes

Minutes of a Meeting of the Board of the Corporation held at the Committee Room, Moulsham Street Campus, Chelmsford on Friday 7 July 2017 at 1.30 pm.

PRESENT: Elaine Oddie (Chair)
Andy Sparks (Principal)
Stuart Hodges
Steve Houghton
Susan Hughes
Michael Lager (Vice Chair)
Janet Maynard
Amanda Montague
Barbara Vohmann
Doug Zeeman

IN ATTENDANCE: Caroline Williams (Deputy Principal)
Mike Tadman (Assistant Principal, People & Services)
Debs Hurst (Assistant Principal, Finance & Risk)
Sarah Hamilton (Director of Business Services)(item 1 only)
Rob Millea (Clerk to the Corporation)
Joanne Harrington (Assistant Clerk)

1180. PRESENTATION: APPRENTICESHIP CHANGES

The Director of Business Services gave a presentation on Apprenticeship changes in the sector and the impact on the College for the future. The slides will be placed on the governors' portal after the Meeting.

She described the background, vision and progress to date on the Government Apprenticeship Reforms and that the new system is intended to be more rigorous and responsive to the needs of employers by placing the employers at the heart of the new system. Furthermore, it is intended that they will become the 'norm' for young people.

The goal is 3 million starts by 2020 and aiming to grow Higher and Degree Level Apprenticeships. There is a public sector target of 2.3% apprenticeships.

The College is on the Register of Apprenticeship training providers from 1 May 2017 without which Apprenticeships cannot be offered. It is effectively a kitemark of recognition and we have been asked by

employers whether we are registered when they have made enquiries about apprenticeship training for their staff.

The Apprenticeship Service is an on-line portal where employers have a digital account based on the levy tax which they pay. On this, they register contracts with a provider. The College then has to make known it is an authorised provider to employers and advertise apprenticeship vacancies which it can offer.

Levy paying employers

These are employers which have a pay bill over £3million and they pay 0.5% tax on their pay bill, subject to a £15,000 allowance annually. This money is placed in their digital account maintained by HMRC and is reimbursed through spending on Apprenticeship training by the employer. It cannot be used to pay wages to apprentices but can be applied to an existing employee who is then signed up as an apprentice, typically when the employer is looking to upskill their workforce.

Non-levy paying employers

For SMEs with a pay bill under £3million who do not pay the levy, they will be funded channelled through the provider allocation system as now wherein the employer will pay 10% of the cost and the Government the balance of 90%.

Once digital funds are exhausted by a levy payer, then the system reverts to the 90:10 mechanism.

16-18 apprentices are free for a micro business and there are incentives of £1000 to the firm and the training provider.

Maths & English provision for Level 2 will be funded direct by Government where it is part of the apprenticeship qualification.

Funding mechanisms for specific apprenticeships are made up of fifteen bands ranging from £1,500 per apprentice to £27,000 depending on the level and complexity of the apprenticeship programme of study.

The College has formed an Apprenticeship Action Group including four members of the SMT to cover all aspects of strategy in readiness for the reforms – it meets regularly. It was noted that RSM (Internal Auditors) carried out an audit earlier this year on the College's preparedness and highlighted some areas for action.

Sarah explained that the new Apprenticeship system changes the current Frameworks to Standards by 2020 and 1400 standards (which are industry/employer specific) will replace the current 250 frameworks.

Standards have been developed & designed by Employer Trailblazer groups to be less prescriptive, outcome based and written in plain English.

These standards do not necessarily contain a qualification but there is an End Point Assessment which is externally verified. Three grades are awarded – pass, merit, distinction – which demonstrate that the completed student is occupationally competent and work ready in that area

The College has carried out detailed competitor analysis on the 9 Essex Colleges to determine what apprenticeships we should deliver. Chelmsford College is the only college in Essex offering Construction (Civil) Apprenticeships. In addition, only one other College is considering delivery of Painting & Decorating and only one other offers IT applications specialisms.

Whilst the new system presents opportunities, it also poses threats. The College needs to increase its breadth of offer and to look at the independent training providers and what they offer as well. It is already the case that, across the country, over 100 Universities have taken up the Higher Level Apprenticeships as a provider thereof.

We have conducted a Business Analysis to determine which employers pay the levy and which do not. There appear to be 55 Levy payers locally and 207 who are not. Already, a number of schools are working with us, together with three hospitals and three local authorities.

As a College, a two pronged approach has been adopted. Levy payers have a dedicated College key account manager and we are also identifying micro businesses in order to push the FREE offer for 16-18 year olds and for disadvantaged young people aged 19-24.

It was noted that some employer standards are not yet ready. It was also noted, as mentioned in the values quoted above, that the Standards will produce more income than a Frameworks. However, it is already clear that the new funding methodology is a difficult concept for some employers to grasp and they are not clear what they are able to access.

It is therefore the case that the College, along with other providers, is in a transition period at present. Employer Engagement must be pushed hard and we must ensure our Marketing is up to speed and publicised on the website.

Governors asked what they can do to assist in the College's efforts to market Apprenticeships. Sarah responded that Governors can act as ambassadors with their contacts in the business community to publicise the provision which we can offer to them to help them grow their businesses.

Sarah was **THANKED** for her informative and challenging presentation.

1181. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for Absence were received from Sarah Noble (Vice Chair).

1182. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

The Clerk to the Corporation renewed his declaration that he acts as Clerk to South Essex College. He also notified the Board that his wife's cousin is the Clerk at Writtle University College.

Barbara Vohmann renewed her declaration as an employee of Anglia Ruskin University.

The Assistant Principal, Finance & Risk renewed her declaration as Director of Finance, South Essex College and General Manager of Essex Shared Services Limited.

No confidential items were notified.

1183. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of Urgent Business.

1184. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 31 MARCH 2017

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 31 March 2017 were **APPROVED** and **SIGNED** by the Chair.

1185. MATTERS ARISING

The Clerk tabled a paper tracking actions arising from the last minutes.

A. PREVENT Training for Governors – not all Governors have yet completed the on-line Training. The Clerk asked that they do so as soon as possible and that the Assistant Clerk be notified, so that we can demonstrate completion to Ofsted during the forthcoming inspection.

B. DBS Checks for Governors – these have all been satisfactorily completed.

C. Technical and Further Education Act 2017 – the Clerk reported verbally on this item. Further information will be provided to Governors as it emerges possibly at the Development Day in October 2017.

D. Pay Award 2017/18 – this matter is covered in Agenda Item 7 on the 2017/18 Budget.

The Clerk gave a brief verbal report on an RSM Seminar he attended in London on Wednesday 5 July and will circulate a written Report after this Meeting.

Governors asked about the HR Consultative Group which was planned. This is now operating with regular meetings and is already contributing to the development further of the HR support in the College.

All other carry forward matters from the last Minutes are covered in the Principal's Report and in the Minutes of the Personnel Finance & General Purposes Minutes held on 27 June 2017, which are part of this Meeting's Agenda papers.

1186. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The Principal presented a written Report for the information of governors, along with a slide presentation highlighting current key issues.

He stated that 2016/17 has been a good year for the College. We have been successful in meeting KPIs set at the start of the year in all instances and he feels that there is reason for cautious optimism as we look forward to the Ofsted inspection due in November this year.

He recapitulated that the Themes for the College this year were:

Progress with the Financial journey
Quality Improvement progress
Essex Area Review

External landscape

He referred to the current external landscape in Further Education commenting on:

- New FE & Skills Minister (and the need to examine Apprenticeships in detail to ensure policy is reflected in practical activity)

- Grammar school 'U turn'
- Little substantive policy change
- Drive to implement PREVENT Agenda

On finance, there is confidence that we will be able to report a slightly bigger surplus than planned (around £230K). The Budget for next year has been framed around a lower cost base derived from individual curriculum teams making decisions on how costs can be saved. As a result, a balanced budget has been computed for next year with an aim to achieve further savings and to grow income in conjunction with Writtle University College under the proposed new collaborations envisaged by the Area Review.

For 2017/18, student recruitment numbers look positive compared to the same point last year. Increases this coming year over last year will then translate to a higher 16-18 allocation of funds for 2018/19 under the lagged funding model.

Initial data from the internal SPOC questionnaires to students indicates two areas for further work – 'feedback to students' and 'is my course well organised'.

The Principal reported on fire evacuation arrangements and external cladding risks following the Grenfell Tower disaster in London recently and shared with governors the statement which we have prepared for media purposes.

Governors sought assurance regarding cladding at our Campuses in the light of the terrible disaster in London. The Principal reiterated the statement included in his written Report which outlines the types of cladding existing at the two Campuses and that we have received reassurance as to their safety from the contractors and fire officials. The College is seeking further independent confirmation to be fully assured.

Our fire evacuation procedures are tried and tested and both campuses are evacuated in under three minutes. It was noted that there is an inconsistency on this point in the minutes of the audit Committee and the PFGP Committee, held recently, which will be corrected in the Audit Committee Minutes.

In response to a governor request, the Principal will prepare a summary document regarding fire evacuation procedures and a 'no notice' evacuation (including Extended Learners) will be arranged for the whole College community once students are back after the summer break.

It was noted that we do not have a sprinkler system at either Campus and we will keep this under review. It was emphasized that neither

Campus is a residential building and there is considerable empty space (corridors/reception area) which facilitates quick evacuation. The Princes Road refurbishment has begun at a cost of £250K which will provide four new classrooms. In the summer break, Phase 2 of the replacement windows programme is taking place at Princes Road. The emphasis this year is on works at Princes Road so that it is brought up to the same standard as at Moulsham Street.

The Hair and Beauty feasibility study (possible move to Princes Road) is being undertaken.

The Principal was delighted to report that a student was in the top 6 of a Peter Jones academy event, eventually finishing second.

Learner Numbers, Funding & Finance

The Board were informed that a surplus of £230K is projected for this year (see minute **1187.2**). However, the business case submitted to the ESFA over our drop in funding allocation for 2017/18 under the lagged funding model was unsuccessful.

Therefore, the College has to cope with a reduction in the 16-18 learner allocation for 2017/18 of £769K and this is incorporated in the Budget for 2017/18 (see minute **1188**).

Admissions for 2017/18 are positive with 242 more applications this year compared to the same point in time last year. There is a drive to maximise recruitment above our 2017/18 allocation which is based on 2101 learners to increase our allocation for 2018/19.

If we increase enrolments above 2101 learners for 2017/18, we will have to finance those additional students in 2017/18 because, on the lagged funding model, we will not receive payment until 2018/19.

Area Reviews

The Principal reported that the Essex Review ended in March but the final Report is still awaited. The draft final recommendation in respect of Chelmsford College and reported to governors at the last Board Meeting is unchanged. In respect of our proposed collaboration with Writtle, we have received £50,000 transitional funding to support its development and implementation.

The first step in taking arrangements forward with Writtle is to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding and a draft was provided to the Board for review.

The Board **APPROVED** the Memorandum of Understanding with Writtle and **AUTHORISED** it to be signed by the Chair of the Corporation and the Principal on behalf of the College.

Governors were reminded that the final recommendation in respect of Chelmsford College was as follows:

'Chelmsford College and Writtle University College to establish a formal collaborative partnership to rationalise and improve the curriculum offer, drive up quality and share services to reduce costs. As stand-alone institutions, the Colleges should continue to review provision and collaboration to ensure a sustainable local offer is available for employers and learners'

The Principal reported that, already, seeds are being sown as regards cooperation between the two institutions from staff looking for dialogue on a number of fronts.

A governor commented that implied licences need to be covered in future arrangements with Writtle and that this should be in the Memorandum of Agreement as things are progressed. The MoU is a strategic document of intent but will develop into a detailed operational MoA.

The Report was **RECEIVED**

1187. FINANCE REPORT

1187.1 Management Accounts for the eleven months to 31 May 2017

The Assistant Principal, Finance & Risk presented the Management Accounts for the eleven months ended 31 May 2017 for discussion and comment by the Board.

For the period, the College is showing an operating surplus of £142K against a budgeted surplus of £163K, an unfavourable variance of £21K.

Total income amounted to £13.052 million and total expenditure amounted to £12.910 million.

The Accounts were accompanied by a Detailed Commentary explaining the variances from budget. These management accounts do not take into account any adjustments which will result from including FRS102 pension adjustments.

Key issues, which had been reported to the PFGP Committee on 27 June 2017, included:

- A presentational error on balance sheet had been corrected
- The risk of clawback on the AEB Budget
- Still on track for a surplus of around £230K
- Satisfactory Financial Health maintained

A governor commented that the Management Accounts package was a very good document, particularly how it related the original budget to the revised forecast on an ongoing basis.

In response to a governor question, it was confirmed that the results for Dovedale Nursery are incorporated in the Management Accounts figures as this document is on a Group basis. At an individual level, Dovedale is expected to perform slightly better than last year (2015/16 profit of £68K).

Governors asked that the wording in section 3.2.2 of the Management Accounts regarding ESFA grants be clarified as it was confusing. It was also noted that the actual cash balance at bank may be higher as the book figure contains reconciling items.

At 31 May 2017, group net assets stood at £13.292 million, including cash of £1.681 million and revalued fixed assets of £32.261 million.

The College's Financial Health for 2016/17 to date, based on the SFA's new methodology, is Satisfactory and will remain so for 2016/17. The forecast is for it to improve to Good for 2017/18.

Cash flow has been positive for the year and the revolving credit facility was not necessary in early 2017.

The current ratio stands at 0.65 slightly better than expectation (0.53). Pay expenditure as a percentage of income is 61.7% against target of 62%. Borrowing as a percentage of income is 45.15% within ESFA tolerances.

All bank covenants are being met.

1187.2 Financial Forecast to 31 July 2017

A revised forecast has been prepared and the anticipated surplus is £230K against an original budgeted surplus of £221K.

The anticipated cash balance at year end is £900K which constitutes the 'pot' for capital expenditure.

The forecast includes no adjustments for pension accounting.

The forecast surplus is dependent on the delivery of Adult Skills and Apprenticeship starts for June and July 2017 and this is the main risk to achieving the revised surplus. There is confidence that the forecast income for these starts will materialise and therefore that the surplus will be achieved.

The Board **RECEIVED** the Management Accounts and Report.

1187.3 Bank Financing

This was deemed to be a Confidential Item under the Instrument & Articles and a separate minute has been prepared in connection with this item, which is attached to these minutes.

1187.4 Capital Expenditure and Estates Programme 2017/18

The Assistant Principal, Finance & Risk **PRESENTED** a Report on the programme of Capital Works proposed for 2017/18, noting that the Programme has been reviewed in detail by the PFGP Committee on 27 June (see minutes 1193) and is recommended for approval by the Board by the Committee.

The specific elements of the planned Capex for next year are included in the PFGP Committee Minutes and are not repeated here.

It was noted that the proposed expenditure of £926K, after the repayment of loan capital and lease capital repayments, is being funded from cash savings in the past two years, but this level of spending will not allow cash savings this year, given the reduction in income.

However, the programme will be phased carefully to ensure that it does not impact the tight cash position expected during the January to March 2018 period.

Further detail of governor challenge is to be found in the Minutes of PFGP Committee of 26 June 2017.

The Board **APPROVED** the Capital Budget for 2017/18.

1187.5 Risk Management Policy

It was confirmed to governors that the Policy tidies up and reinforces current practice. Although not completed, the Equality Impact Assessment was confirmed to not be an issue in respect of this Policy.

On the recommendation of the Audit Committee, the Board **APPROVED** the Risk Management Policy for the College, which had been reviewed by Management.

1188. FINANCIAL PLAN 2016-19

The Assistant Principal, Finance & Risk presented the Three Year Financial Plan for the College, in the form required by the ESFA and which has to be approved by the Board and submitted to the ESFA by 31 July 2017.

The Plan incorporates the expected outturn for 2016/17, the budget for 2017/18 and the forecast for 2018/19.

The Board noted the expected outturn for 2016/17 (see minute **1187.2** above).

The Board then considered the Budget for 2017/18 and noted the scrutiny already provided to the draft Budget by the PFGP committee on 27 June 2017, as noted in the Minutes of that Committee (see minute **1193**).

The Assistant Principal, Finance & Risk explained the changes in the Financial Handbook for this year and the need for the Plan to have a detailed attaching Commentary. As the financial plan template was not received until 15 June 2017, the PFGP Committee was unable to review it, although they did review the high level proposed Budget for next year.

The Committee reviewed that draft Budget which showed a projected surplus of £200K based on finding further savings, as yet not fully identified, of £322K. The Committee requested that the Budget be reworked to deliver a break even position for 2017/18 with the expectation that it could be improved through savings during the year.

The Assistant Principal, Finance & Risk indicated that the Budget will be reviewed again in December to see what progress is being made and whether a surplus will be possible. This will only be likely if additional cost savings are made.

The Principal also stated that if we over recruit for 2017/18 (i.e. more learners than 2016/17) the College could revert to ESFA in February with a revised business case for more money to be paid in 2017/18.

The Board examined the Cash flow forecast prepared through to 31 July 2019, noting how critical it will be to manage the tight position in January – April each year so that it will not be necessary to use the overdraft facility. A governor observed that next March is very very tight.

A governor noted that key factors for the achievement of the plan include a need to boost enrolments, need to sell Beacon House and need to relocate Hair & Beauty.

A governor asked whether we could participate in developing Beacon House with a developer but the Principal stated that this had been previously looked but not favoured as we do not have the capital resources to manage that.

A governor noted that the Budget was break even but the aim, as discussed at PFGP Committee, was to work towards a surplus of the same level as this year's expectations. This was acknowledged but would require further significant savings where the scope for such savings is limited, given progress already made over the past three years.

The Board was provided with a detailed commentary of the key assumptions for the 2017/18 Budget:

- Reduction in 16-18 learner allocation of £769K compared to 2016/17 on the lagged funding model (based on 2,101 learners)
- Adult learning constant at £961K but this may reduce if more 19+ learners are funded through learner loans
- Uncertainty regarding income flows from the Apprenticeship Reforms – figures based on historic information with limited growth predicted for next year
- Tuition fees and education contracts reduced due to the impact of the Apprenticeship Levy and prudent assumptions regarding the contracts with CITB and JTL
- Forecast growth in the nursery and after school club income contributions
- Staff costs increasing due to whole year pension contributions rise, full year impact of NI increases and a proposed 1% salary increase (plus relevant increments). The Board need to consider the affordability of a Pay Award for 2017/18 and this will be considered in December 2017 – costs about £50K per annum.
- Other costs set to achieve the breakeven position

The Board **APPROVED** the Financial Plan for 2016-19 including the Budget for 2017/18.

1189. SUB-CONTRACTING ARRANGEMENTS 2017/18

The Board **RECEIVED** a briefing from the Principal on the College's Subcontracting Plans for 2017-18.

It is proposed that the level of this work will be similar to 2016-17 amounting to around £300K with Aspire with whom we have worked with in the past few years. The learners are unemployed people coming from JobCentrePlus. Final amounts will not be determined until recruitment is finalised for 2017-18. Before any contract is entered into, the Board will be notified to allow pre-contract scrutiny to take place.

The College will subcontract in the same way as before in line with its Subcontracting Fees & Charging Policy. This Policy is a contractual requirement of the ESFA before any subcontracting work can be agreed. The Internal Auditors review subcontracting controls every year in accordance with ESFA funding requirements.

In response to governor questions, the Principal confirmed that we monitor quality at the provider and no issues have been identified. He also indicated that with the development of Apprenticeships, there may be opportunities to generate additional income with partners. However, the focus must primarily be on outcomes over the next few months given the Ofsted inspection not on commercial income.

The Board **APPROVED** the Subcontracting & Fees Charging Policy for 2017-18.

1190. FEES POLICY 2017/18

The Board **REVIEWED** the Draft Fees Policy for 2017-18, which is required each year.

The Principal introduced this item and commented that the Policy is fully compliant with HE and FE funding guidance and it also sets out ways in which the College can assist students where fees might prevent them from accessing provision. The Policy had been considered by the PFGP Committee on 27 June 2017 and recommended by them to the Board for approval.

Governors noted that the Policy makes clear that it does not apply to Dovedale Nursery.

The Board **APPROVED** the Fees Policy for 2017-18.

1191. PROGRESS AGAINST COLLEGE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Deputy Principal **PRESENTED** an updated College Improvement Plan showing Ofsted Support and Challenge Actions and progress to date.

The Plan was **SUPPLEMENTED** by extensive comments by the Deputy Principal, focusing on each of the seven priorities.

Governors noted that good progress is being made against all seven College priorities.

Priorities 4 (good progress and achievement of students on 16-19 Study Programmes) and 5 (improvement of TLA through the achievement of five key expectations) remain RAG rated as RED as, whilst there has been significant improvement in performance, there is still some minor inconsistency across the College.

Of the 28 key actions listed in the CIP (which are all linked to the seven priorities), most have been completed, details of which were noted in the CIP Report.

The Monitoring Report sits alongside the most recent KPIs and the Ofsted Support and Challenge Visit letter and should be read in that context.

In response to governor questions, the Deputy Principal confirmed:

- There is some anxiety regarding English & Maths outcomes as in other Colleges with the legacy exams whereas schools have been undertaking the new GCSEs
- Christine Rose is returning to the College to give advice on British Values to staff who are Work Based tutors to roll out BV to those students
- Paula Heaney, former Regional Lead Ofsted Inspector, will be offering consultation before the inspection later this year, probably September/October, with governors participating
- The new management structure has had a very positive impact and is interconnected, with Middle Managers having to take their own responsibility
- Considerable challenge on Curriculum & Quality matters by governors is recorded in the Minutes of the Quality & Learners Committee in May 2017 (part of the Agenda of this Meeting)

The Report from the Deputy Principal was **RECEIVED**.

1192. GOVERNANCE MATTERS

The Chair left the room and the Clerk took the Chair. The Board **CONSIDERED** the proposed re-appointment of the Chair as a Governor of the College for a further four year term, beginning on 1 April 2017 and ending on 31 March 2021.

The Board **APPROVED** the re-appointment of Elaine Oddie as a Governor of Chelmsford College for the four years beginning 1 August 2017, nem con.

Elaine Oddie returned to the Meeting and resumed the Chair.

The Clerk **REPORTED** on a number of Governance matters:

1. The 2016/17 Governance Self-Assessment Questionnaire was circulated to all Governors by the Clerk and responses requested by the end of July. A Report will be prepared by the Clerk for the September Board Meeting.
2. Will Dean has completed his term as student governor of the College, as he has completed his studies here. A replacement is being sought for 2017/18, who hopefully will be able to join the Board at the September Meeting. The new student governor would join the Quality & Learners Committee, the first Meeting of which in the new academic year is on 7 November 2017.
3. Michael Lager has indicated that, when his term of office ends on 31 March 2018, he will not seek re-appointment to the Board. The Chair and the Clerk are looking at some possible candidates to replace Michael, with emphasis on financial expertise.
4. The Board noted that the terms of office of Sarah Noble and Susan Hughes end on 31 March 2018 and both are eligible for re-appointment.
5. Bob Edes has completed his term as a co-opted Member of the Audit Committee.
6. There are no changes proposed to the Membership of Committees at this stage, subject to decisions regarding the possible disbanding of the PFGP Committee (see below). The Clerk provided the Board with a list of Board & Committee Memberships applicable from 1 August 2017.

ACTION: CLERK

Reports on Governor Visits

Governor Visits are noted in the Minutes of the Quality & Learners Committee (minute **1193**).

Doug Zeeman attended the vast majority of the Student Celebration events during June and the opening of the Secret Garden.

A number of governors attended the seminars on British Values held earlier this week as did the Clerk.

A log of Governor Visits will be maintained in the future and governors are asked to inform Joanne Harrington of visits they make to the College.

Personnel Finance & General Purposes Committee

The Board **CONSIDERED** a Paper to disband the Personnel Finance & General Purposes Committee, which was recommended by the Committee itself at its Meeting on 27 June 2017.

After discussion, the Board **APPROVED** the following resolutions:

1. That the PFGP Committee be disbanded with effect from 1 August 2017
2. That Elaine Oddie and Michael Lager be appointed as designated Finance Governors to undertake the duties outlined in the Paper
3. That Amanda Montague be appointed to the Audit Committee and Elaine Oddie to the Quality & Learners Committee with effect from 1 August 2017 in each case
4. That the new arrangements be reviewed from the risk perspective by the Internal Auditors late in 2017/18
5. That the new arrangements be classified as a low level governance risk in the College Risk Register
6. That the new arrangements be reviewed at the first meeting of the Board in the 2018/19 academic year, having regard to its practical operation and the review by the Internal Auditors

The Board felt that the new arrangements, which incorporate monthly reviews of the Management Accounts and other regular financial data, would provide more timely scrutiny of the College's finances.

The Board **APPROVED** the Meeting Schedule for the 2017/18 academic year and the Schedule of Business for the Board, the Quality & Learners Committee and the Audit Committee for 2017/18.

The Board **NOTED** that Task and Finish Groups will be convened as and when required during the year. Such a Group is scheduled for examination of the draft 2018/19 Budget on 26 June 2018.

As matters develop with Writtle (see Principal's Report), the previous Area Review Steering Group could be retained to scrutinise and comment on specific proposals to develop and embed closer contacts with Writtle.

The Clerk **ADVISED** the Board that the College Governance Documents and Protocols had been reviewed and approved last July and no changes are considered necessary at the present time. The sections regarding the PFGP Committee will be retained for the time being and will serve as a guide for the work of the two designated Finance Governors.

Michael Lager raised the question of the Board structure and actual Membership. He felt that, following completion of the Area Review process and his intention to retire from the Board on 31 March next, the Board should consider strengthening the Board and actively look for more Governors.

The Board believed that more senior people from business would be welcome, given the Apprenticeship Reforms, and another governor with a financial background. It may be desirable to seek a governor from Writtle University College given the likely closer ties between the two institutions. Given our work with schools, a school governor might be a possibility.

It was **AGREED** that the Chair contact the Chair of the Writtle Board for such a discussion.

The Clerk indicated that he had discussed with the Chair two possible candidates with financial backgrounds to join the Board and would pursue those possibilities.

ACTION: CHAIR/CLERK

1193. MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Board **RECEIVED** copies of the unapproved Minutes of the following Committee Meetings which have taken place since the last Meeting of the Board:

- Quality & Learners Committee 16 May 2017
- Audit Committee 20 June 2017
- Personnel Finance & General Purposes 27 June 2017

The Minutes of the PFGP Committee will be signed off by the Chair of the Committee after this Meeting for completeness.

Governors raised a number of points on the unapproved Committee Minutes:

- Catering provision appears to be in decline with reducing numbers of students and it is hoped that the refreshment of Princes Road may help alleviate this drop
- The Audit Committee Chair asked that governors indicate areas of the College which they might like to see in future Internal Audit Plans
- Encourage conversations with Essex County Council about Adult Community Learning provision through the Cabinet Member responsible for education – these should be pursued
- Schedule more Meetings of the Board/Committees at Princes Road

ACTION: CLERK

1194. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The Board **RECEIVED** a detailed paper itemising KPIs for the College and current progress and performance, with commentary.

The Principal drew governors' attention to the 16-18 Study Programme figures for Looked After Children retention, currently 73% against a target of 92%. This area needed some further analysis. In response to a governor question, it was confirmed that this related to about 20-30 learners.

Otherwise, there were no other RED rated items.

1195. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Principal distributed copies of a letter from the ESFA regarding Early Intervention due to apprenticeships dropping below minimum standards. He had had an informal Meeting with the Intervention Unit to examine the issue and this has now been formalised in writing. The letter will be placed on the portal. It confirms that no formal intervention is considered necessary at this time.

A copy of the College publication – Stay Safe Safeguarding – was tabled by Stuart Hodges and he encouraged all governors to undertake the quiz to reinforce their knowledge.

Susan Hughes asked that details of themes relating to PDBW during tutorial each week which have a different theme be given to governors.

1196. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Friday 29 September 2017 at 2.00 pm.

There being no further business, the Meeting terminated at 5.00 pm.

Signed.....Dated.....