

CHELMSFORD COLLEGE
BOARD OF THE CORPORATION
20TH MARCH 2015

Members Present:

Janice Maclean (Chair), Andy Sparks (Principal), Elaine Oddie, Michael Lager, Graham Evans, Marie Kemp, Heather Clarke, Jonathan Swan, Phil Bridge, Sarah Noble, Angelika Baxter, Susan Hughes, and Donna Finning.

In Attendance:

Debs Hurst (Director of Finance), Mike Tadman (Director of Human Resources), Caroline Williams (Director of Quality and Learning), Marco Iciek (Director of Curriculum and Students), John Fowl (Clerk to the Corporation), Joanne Saward (Minuting Secretary)

Prior to the commencement of the meeting the Board received a presentation from Alison Davies on the College Improvement Plan and Self-Assessment Report. The presentation informed the governing body of the changes made to the CIP and SAR based on the observations made by Ofsted who at the last inspection had indicated that the SAR lacked precision and measurability. As a consequence the College had produced a revised format and structure in order to produce it for the current round. The HMI, Matt Vaughan, has seen the revised format and has confirmed that it is what is required.

Governors were taken through the departmental CIPs and were shown all areas covered which in turn would feed into the College level CIP. Each of the 15 College objectives can be drilled down to view the actions planned in order to achieve the objective. The revised format for the College SAR had been produced to show the actions planned at both departmental and section level and the objective in the CIP that it is linked to. All actions identified are expected to be able to demonstrate an impact for learners. The Governors asked that they be kept informed of the progress against the 15 strategic objectives and that the progress report be included as part of the standard KPI report.

The Board thanked Alison Davies for her presentation.

1028. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Barbara Vohmann and Bill Pigram.

1029. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND TO NOTIFY ANY CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

There were no declarations made and no confidential items notified.

1030. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12TH DECEMBER 2014

The minutes were **Approved**

1031. MATTERS ARISING

- a) The Chair reported that Dick Madden having stepped down from the Board had agreed to support the College with respect to safeguarding matters when appropriate. The Chair and the Principal have arranged that they will meet

informally with him during the course of the year to discuss any issues raised under this heading.

b) Essex Joint Venture Agreement

Debs Hurst confirmed that she was still pursuing the public indemnity insurance arrangements for the joint venture.

Mike Tadman reported that he had investigated the employment contract for Debs Hurst and that it covered each circumstance relating to her three separate positions with Chelmsford College, South Essex College and Essex Shared Services Limited.

1032. TO RECEIVE THE UNCONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE QUALITY & LEARNERS COMMITTEE HELD ON 10TH FEBRUARY 2015

Members were informed that Sarah Noble had been asked to undertake a watching brief over maths and English provision within the College and had already undertaken a number of learning walks in respect of this.

In response to a query it was confirmed that issues identified with failing staff had been reflected in the way new staff are now recruited and also in dealing with existing staff who were not performing to the required standard.

1033. TO RECEIVE THE UNCONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE HELD ON 4TH MARCH 2015

Jonathan Swan advised that the Committee is now concentrating on being able to give the Board the assurance needed when signing the annual accounts each year.

Members' attention was drawn to the assurance/ risk dashboard which provided a pictorial view of the strategic risks identified.

The College had gone out to tender for external audit services. Just two firms had responded within the tender deadline and KPMG was recommended for re-appointment.

It was **Resolved** that KPMG be appointed as external auditors for the next three years with annual reviews thereafter

1034. TO RECEIVE THE UNCONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE PF&GP COMMITTEE HELD ON 10TH MARCH 2015

It was confirmed that the Joint Venture Agreement with South Essex College had been agreed on a 63% to 33% share basis and not as shown in the minutes. These will be amended at the meeting of the next PF&GP committee. The recommendations of the Committee were noted and that they will be dealt with elsewhere on this agenda.

1035. TO RECEIVE THE UNCONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE SEARCH & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

The Chair drew attention to her decision to stand down from the Board at the end of December 2015. It was her intention to continue as Chair until the end of August 2015 before handing over to her successor. The Committee reviewed the re-appointment of Ray Joy and Angelika Baxter and considered both brought particular skills to the work of the Board that the Board would wish to retain.

It was **Resolved** that:

- a) Janice Maclean should be re-appointed to a further term of office to end on 31st December 2015 when she will step down as a Governor.
- b) Ray Joy as Head of Internal Audit for Chelmsford City Council brings the necessary skill knowledge of auditing to bear on the work of the Audit Committee and as such the Board approved his re-appointment for a further four year term of office as a co-opted member of the Audit Committee until 31st July 2019
- c) Angelika Baxter brings significant experience of working with minority/ ethnic groups to bear on the work of the Board and as such the Board approves her re-appointment for a further four year term of office until 31st March 2019 and that she should continue as Chair of the Quality & Learners Committee

The Board was informed that the Committee had considered establishing an Ambassador role but had decided not to have a defined role of this sort for the immediate future

The Clerk informed the Governors that it had been intended to submit a skills audit summary to the Search & Governance Committee but not all Governors had returned their completed forms in time for this to occur. Those Governors still to complete the skills audit return were encouraged to do so as soon as possible.

1036. TO RECEIVE THE PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The Board was informed that the recent national budget had not set out any obvious provision that would impact on education generally. Members noted the varied messages being put out by the different political parties at this time and it was understood irrespective of which political party was successful at the May 2015 general election there will continue to be a period of austerity, that maths and English will be a priority together with employer involvement, apprenticeships and work experience. The future of traineeships is less certain. Members received details of the College statistics for retention, apprenticeships and adult learning and it was noted that the 24+ advanced learning loans were currently under target as the take up of these loans had not been as high as expected.

The financial health of the College has fallen and the SFA has graded the College as inadequate and a Notice of Concern has been sent to the Chair of Governors.

A financial recovery plan has been put in place by the College management team which will address six areas these being:

- i) the arrangements of a £400k bridging loan to be in place from April 2015
- ii) to establish a curriculum cost model
- iii) to renegotiate the loans held by the College in respect of earlier capital developments
- iv) to achieve £300k recurrent cost savings
- v) to achieve a modest income growth
- vi) to reduce the College operations to two campuses in order to reduce operating costs

The Board was informed that the recovery plan was to be agreed by the SFA and that this should be achieved by 30th April 2015.

Quality improvement was an essential aspect of the College recovery plan and the Board was informed that the HMI Matt Vaughan had sent a third 'support and challenge' letter setting out the issues that had still to be resolved in the College. Governors were told of the efforts being made to address the delivery of maths and English and the difficulties in recruiting suitably qualified staff for this. It was agreed that the Quality & Learners Committee would receive regular reports detailing the progress on the actions identified in the quality improvement plan.

1037. TO RECEIVE THE COLLEGE SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT 2013/14

The Board received the College SAR produced in the new format. Feedback from the HMI, Matt Vaughan had identified that the SAR is accurate, clear and easily understood and well informed by appendices that are clearly linked to judgements made in the SAR. The SAR is also now clearly linked to the Common Inspection Framework and was considered to be candid, self-critical and full of spirit by the HMI. Governors welcomed the new format as they found it more easily assimilated

It was **Resolved** that the SAR would be added to the Governors' portal and the staff intranet.

1038. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON FUNDING 2015-16

Governors were provided with detail of the EFA funding allocation for 2015/16 and the comparison with 2014/15. The Principal explained how the banding of students had resulted in an additional sum of £78k being received from the EFA. Offset against this was the fact that 'high needs' funding is less but it is hoped some of this will be recovered from Essex County Council.

The SFA allocation remains the same for apprenticeships but £46k less on classroom based allocations.

The Principal identified how the figures would affect the financial recovery plan and overall expressed the view that this was a positive outcome.

1039. TO RECEIVE THE FINANCIAL RECOVERY PLAN

It was resolved that this minute should remain confidential

1040. TO RECEIVE THE MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS, JANUARY 2015

The main variances of income and expenditure were noted and that at present a £10k surplus is forecast for the year end 2014/15. To date the short term loan agreed with the bank had not been used but it was expected that the College would need to use it from April 2015.

1041. TO RECEIVE THE RISK DARTBOARD

The 'Dartboard' graphically represents the key strategic risks identified within the College. The risks nearer the centre of the chart are considered the most serious for the Board to note.

Governors were told that if the financial outturn shows a surplus this year then it could move the College from being graded 'Inadequate' by SFA to a grade of satisfactory.

The recent audit of Essex shared Services is expected to show a 'satisfactory' grade for financial health.

A discussion on the risks regarding safeguarding and the 'Prevent' agenda took place and Marco Iciek explained how there had been a shift in the way Ofsted viewed this arrangement in Colleges.

It was **Resolved** that the report be received

1042. TO REVIEW THE PUBLIC VALUE STATEMENT

The Public Value Statement had initially been agreed in March 2013. Good practice suggests that this should be reviewed periodically to ensure the statement continues to reflect the values held by the College. After discussion it was agreed to amend the first paragraph and include the Mission Statement. The Clerk and Principal will revise the wording of the Public Value Statement and this will be submitted for approval by the Board at the July meeting.

1043. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The point was raised that the College should ensure that any proposed changes to the programmes offered should be considered in relation to local market need.

1044. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Friday 10th July 2015

Signed _____
(Chair)

Date _____

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