

**BLACKPOOL AND THE FYLDE COLLEGE**

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Corporation Board  
held at 5pm on Tuesday 6 May 2014  
in the Main Committee Room, Bispham Campus**

**Present:** A. Cavill [*Chair*] M. Bateman  
H. Broughton M. Chandler  
S. Crowther A. Gilmore  
P. Graves J. Mills  
L. Moffat A. Parmley  
B. Robinson L. Smith

**Together with:** C. Hill, Deputy Principal  
A. Edington, Executive Director, Finance and Planning  
D. Platt, Executive Director, Commercial Development  
C. Thomas, Director of 14-19 (*for item 2370*)  
G. Winward, Clerk to the Board  
C. Crankshaw, PA/Minuting Secretary

**Apologies:** J. Ashton, N. Farley

*The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.*

**2360 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**2361 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2014 were **confirmed** as an accurate record.

**2362 Matters Arising (not elsewhere on the Agenda)**

a) *Item 2353: Principal's Report, Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) - :*  
the Principal advised that she would be providing an update on this item as part of her main report.

**2363 Chief Executive's Report**

The Principal gave a verbal update to supplement the information contained in her written report highlighting the communication to staff around the proposed changes to employment contracts. Members were also informed of a submission that had been made to the LEP for the funding of a number of capital projects (13, over four years). The outcome of these bids, was awaited.

A number of questions were raised on the information presented, including on the National Success Rate tables and also the standardisation of staff employment contracts. Management responded to these enquiries and the latter topic generated particular debate.

## CONFIRMED

Members **noted** the proposals being taken measures to standardise and improve efficiencies within the staff employment contracts and **endorsed** these.

*A verbal update was also given on actions arising from the Annual Planning Forum, which was deemed confidential*

Members **noted** the above information and also one further topic covered in the written report, namely Ministerial Visits.

### 2364 Property Strategy Update

The Executive Director, Finance and Planning briefly outlined the main points from her report and responded to Member's questions. Highlights included:-

- Contract awarded for Construction Skills extension – work to commence in May 2014
- Advanced Technology Centre (ATC) - new build progressed to competitive tender stage
- Cleveleys and Thornton buildings Mechanical and Electrical (M&E) replacement contract awarded – work commenced in April 2014
- Overcladding project completed on time and on budget
- Successful bid for £540k from the SFA for projects over a number of buildings at the University Centre – work commencing June 2014
- Opportunity to bid for monies for Energy Skills HQ in collaboration with Blackpool Council

The latter topic prompted some questions and discussion, during which the Principal and Executive Director elaborated upon the proposals and an associated recent visit from the Energy Minister. Meeting employer needs was emphasised during the debate, as was reflecting the government's energy priorities and the College's role in ensuring local skills needs were addressed. The Board expressed broad support for this project.

There was also a questions and answer session on other aspects of the report, including matters related to the College sites at Carr Head, Ansdell and the University Centre. In conclusion, an invitation was extended to Members for one representative to participate in the tender opening meeting for the ATC build project. Those interested were requested to contact the Clerk's office.

The report was **noted**.

### 2365 Annual Capital Programme

The Executive Director, Finance and Planning introduced the item which historically had always come to the July meeting of the Board. It had been brought earlier this year in order to facilitate appropriate actions, including tenders, to be undertaken in good time over the summer period and items in place ready for the new academic year.

The Executive Director then outlined her proposals for expenditure of £1.68m on capital equipment items in 2014/15. It was noted that much of the expenditure would be on the IT infrastructure and the Executive Director answered questions on the previous year's spend and the 5 year rolling plan now in place for IT.

The Board **approved** the capital items budget for 2014/15 and for it to be expended.

## 2366 Tuition Fees (HE) 2015/16 – Update

The Executive Director, Commercial Development presented the report which was a follow-up to the item taken at the December meeting, where Members requested further details on comparisons. The Executive Director advised that desk research had been undertaken with 131 universities and 212 colleges with the conclusion that fee levels were not expected to adversely affect student recruitment for full time courses. Questions were then raised on the content of the report, clarification of current Student Number Control (SNC rules) and conclusions on price sensitivity.

The Deputy Principal then noted that upcoming changes to the SNC regime may affect the pricing of other providers in the future. Members were informed that currently 80% of the College's students studying on HE courses were within travel-to-learn locations. She added that the vocational content of the College's HE offer was also considered important for recruitment onto these courses.

The Board thanked the Executive Director for his report.

## 2367 Finance – Period 8 Report

The Executive Director, Finance and Planning outlined the current position, with the surplus projected to achieve the full year £2m as forecast. The Executive Director then briefly detailed the key points of her report, explained variances and responded to questions on capital project spending, depreciation, the Park Road campus upgrade and the additional restructuring costs.

In response to a question on provision of 5 year cash flow figures, the Principal explained that it was difficult to produce long term projections as the main sources of funding were only known on an annual basis. The Executive Director advised that it was really only meaningful to provide a 3 year cash flow projection which would provide information up to 2015/16 and **agreed** to provide this. Responding to a further question on the annual cash flow position, the Executive Director explained that delays in implementing the Property Strategy had affected the picture this year and thus provided additional comfort at present.

The Board then:

- a) **approved** the request for additional monies in respect of:-
  - £250k of depreciation monies for upgrade of Park Road campus
  - £200k for additional restructuring costs
- b) **requested** more frequent sight of the 3 year cash flow forecast and also the longer term forecast on at least an annual basis

## 2368 Committee Updates

### a) Quality and Standards Committee

In the absence of the Chair of the Q&S Committee, the Principal informed Members that the meeting of 25 February had mainly consisted of a review of the HE Self Evaluation Document and standard mid-year review items.

### b) Audit Committee

The Audit Chair advised that the Audit Committee now had three new members and then briefly took Members through the minutes from the 19 March meeting.

## CONFIRMED

Particular attention was drawn to a recommendation from the Committee concerning an amendment to the College's Financial Regulations in respect of 'Restrictions and Exclusions on Ordering and Purchasing' relating to re-tendering of professional services contracts. The Audit Committee had fully considered this amendment, which was then explained in more detail by the Executive Director, Finance and Planning, including the rationale for the change. Further discussion followed, including questions for clarification.

The Board **approved** that the Financial Regulations be amended as proposed, with the additions that this be subject to no restrictions in any funding agreements and that relevant provisions be added into tender documents.

### c) Search Committee

The Clerk advised Members that following discussion at the Board's Planning Forum earlier this year, it had been agreed to bring forward minutes from Search Committee meetings to the full Board, subject to the removal of any personal information.

The Chair summarised the key information, namely that the Committee had met at the end of March with two prospective Members, Kate Shane and Peter Lloyd. The Chair briefly apprised Members of the skill sets that these candidates could bring to the Board and it was noted that a copy of the application forms had been circulated for additional information.

The Board supported the Committee's recommendations and **agreed** to appoint:-

- a) Kate Shane as a Member of the Board with effect from 6 May 2014 for a four-year period of office.
- b) Peter Lloyd as a Member of the Board with effect from 6 May 2014 for a four-year period of office.

The Board also:

- c) **approved** the Clerk's suggestion that Prof Lloyd be appointed with immediate effect to the Quality & Standards Committee, as a meeting of that Committee was due and the vacancy there had been held for a while, awaiting such a candidate with an educational background.

### 2369 'New Freedoms' – Governance related proposals

The Clerk introduced the item which had arisen from discussions at the Annual Planning Forum on the 'New Freedoms' which were available to colleges to amend their own Instruments and Articles of Government. The Clerk and Principal had met, as requested, to formulate specific proposals arising from these for the Board's consideration.

The Clerk took Members through the 17 specific propositions and options for debate and the Board:-

- a) gave a **decision in principle** against a number of the proposals, to be incorporated into a revised Instruments and Articles document
- b) **requested** further information in a couple of areas
- c) **noted** that some consultation with affected groups would be necessary to progress certain items

CONFIRMED

The Clerk would action and update the Board on progress.

**2370 Board Members' Forum**

The Chair introduced the item and asked for any questions or Members' feedback on events.

A. Parmley advised that in her capacity as Vice Chair she had recently met with Stuart Crane, Director of Capital Projects and Estates and Joanne Shephard, Health & Safety Manager. She had found the visit to be of value and particularly had been most impressed with the rigour of College processes in this area and was able to give the Board assurance on the impressive way H&S was implemented and the diligence of those involved. The Board welcomed this information.

*C. Thomas joined the meeting*

**2371 Governor Briefing: 16-19 Study Programmes - Progress**

C. Thomas responded to questions on the circulated paper.

Key points included:-

- Higher numbers taking maths and English GCSE
- Projected improvements in success rates expected for both maths and English
- Meaningful placements for students – 30 days minimum on external placement
- Pleasing progress on 16-19 study programmes

In response to a question on the higher level of uptake of English GCSEs, the Deputy Principal clarified that this was owing to students not being required to take both English and maths alongside their chosen course of study. Regarding work placements, the Deputy Principal also explained that a key to the new Study Programme approach was that it was not just about qualifications but what was 'wrapped around' them, particularly employability skills.

*C. Thomas left the meeting*

*Staff Members and Student Members and staff in attendance, together with the Clerk, withdrew from the meeting for the following item.*

**2372 Confidential Item**

**2373 Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting to be held on **Tuesday 3 June** at **5pm** in the **Room 204/204a** at the **University Centre Campus**.

*The meeting concluded at 7.10 pm*