

**Open Minutes  
Meeting of the Corporation  
held on Thursday 27 March 2014 at 8.00am  
at Matthew Boulton Campus**

<b>Present:</b>	<b>Apologies:</b>
Steve Hollis (Chair)	Julie Jasper (JJ)
Jane Williams (JW) (Vice Chair)	
Christine Braddock (Principal)	
Gala Albas (Student Governor)	
Gurjeet Bains (GB)	
Steve Brittan	
Veronica Docherty (VD)	
Taher Hussain (Support Staff Governor) (TH)	
Kathryn James (KJ)	
Andrew Madden (AM)	
Anthony McCourt (AMcC)	
David Nolan (DN)	
Ian Oakes (IO)	
Jenni Ord (JO)	
Clive Stone (CS)	
Tim Sunter (TS)	
Dagen Thompson (Academic Staff Governor) (DT)	
Daali Wouhra (DW)	
<b>In Attendance:</b>	
Louise Jones Chief Operating Officer (LJ)	
Mukesh Kumar Chief Operating Officer (MK)	
Julie Nugent Chief Operating Officer (JN)	
Bob Pattni Chief Operating Officer (BP)	
Philip Heath (Acting Clerk)	
Valerie Martin (Interim Clerk)	

**Welcome, Apologies & Declarations of Interest**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted the apologies that had been tendered. Members agreed to appoint Valerie Martin as Interim Clerk and Philip Heath as acting Clerk for this meeting.

The Chair said he had agreed to take the confidential minutes together and Items 5 and 6 out of sequence in order to facilitate the flow of the meeting.

There were no declarations of interest made save for those already declared in the Register of Interests.

**Item 1 – Open Minutes of the meetings held on 11<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> December 2013**

The Chair briefly referred to the open minutes of meetings on 11 and 17 December 2013 asking for any questions and then the open minutes were approved as a true and accurate record of the meetings.

### **Matters Arising from Open Minutes**

There were no additional matters arising that were not already being covered on the agenda.

### **Item 2 – Mid-year Reviews**

A full and detailed presentation was made to the Board as follows

A presentation on curriculum and quality was presented by MK highlighting the position as at the end of last year with an 87.7% success rate against the national average of 85.9% this was showing an upward trend over three years, with a further predicted trend upward for end of the year. This showed the College to be above the national average, giving a generally very strong picture. The position with regard to apprenticeships showed a rather more challenging picture with ongoing discussions with SFA following the merger.

Staff Development was ongoing with an emphasis on 'a total teaching and learning College' approach with a focus on quality assurance and inspection readiness, with curriculum and quality looking strong, giving a really good mid-year picture.

A general discussion took place with MK responding to questions raised by the members.

LJ then gave a presentation of the Workforce Development Strategy setting out the key priorities:

- Performance management
- Harmonisation
- Sickness absence management and performance
- Business planning and workforce deployment
- Monitoring staff utilisation

LJ stated that the workforce deployment figures were provided together with details showing a staff turnover of 5.34% and sickness absence at 4.4% against a target of 3%. Following meeting with the unions the Absence policy has been revised to include thresholds and sanctions and will be implemented from 1 June. Further breakdowns of absence show those stress related and an analysis by disability, age, ethnicity as well as future work to break down the figures by site.

LJ then led members through the equality and diversity figures giving an overview of the College's position.

A general discussion took place with LJ responding to questions raised by the members.

B P introduced the financial section of the presentation showing the mid-year update, the presentation covered turnover, delivery, EFA, SFA, Apprenticeships and tuition fees. It also covered the rise in tuition fees together with the issues of depreciation, pensions, salaries, debt recovery and the debt collection process (with Debtor days at 107 against the target of 49 days).

BP took members through the Risk profile, with different part of organisation identifying risk and therefore a balance needed across the organisation. The challenges and opportunities and the funding changes next year were highlighted, the differences potentially being;

- £6.0m SFA/EFA funding shortfall
- £0.5m Pension contributions increase
- £0.5m Auto enrolments increase
- £0.5m Inflation / pay awards built-in

In response to governors questions on the debt collection process BP stressed that debt collection was an ongoing priority.

CB then spoke on strategy and future trends for new business geographically spread. She referred to the KPMG draft report, highlighting the issues of collaboration and quality and the future opportunities the College could pursue. The paper which was jointly prepared by KPMG and the College would be brought to a future board for discussion.

The Chair confirmed that there was no decision for the board to make on these issues.

### **Item 3 – Innovation and Developments**

The board then received a presentation from JN which covered the Greater Birmingham and Solihull FE Consortium, the Schools strategy and Partnering with local universities. JN then informed the Board of the IT Developments across the 24 sites with a comprehensive audit of technology in the classroom (ILT).

JN also spoke about strengthening partnerships with employers such as JLR and delivering through LEPS, working with the three in the region, highlighting the current relationship with GBS LEP, the developing work with the Black Country LEP and limited contract so far with Worcestershire. She also referred to the capital funding shift to LEPs and the current bids to GBS for £11.5m and Black County for £6m.

The Board were then presented with slides covering numerous events and initiatives that have taken place during the first half of this year.

**Action:** A copy of the combined presentation to be placed in Dropbox.

### **Item 4 – Report from Academic Standards Committee**

VD (acting Committee Chair) informed the Board that success rates are on track and predicted to increase in line with expectations across key delivery areas in 2013/14. Attendance rates are 87.5% however this figure is predicted to show improvement as the term progresses. The Committee had asked for a detailed breakdown of success rate predictions for AS and A2. All under-performance is closely monitored and where necessary processes are put in place to ensure students reach their predicted grades.

VD stated that the Committee had discussed the QIP in detail. Committee members had asked for a possible KIT session on one area of risk/weakness relating to under-performing courses to be arranged, mirroring the Audit Committee approach.

VD stated that the Teaching & Learning Review changed its approach this year with a range of alternative methods had been implemented such as using Toolkit, Learning Walks, and Room Zoning. The Committee noted that there were a small number of Grade 4 and Grade 3 lesson observations which were being closely monitored and supported.

VD informed the Board that equality and diversity were integrated into the College ethos and learner experience with emphasis being placed on reducing achievement gaps and raising success rates for particular groups. The Customer Service report showed that complaints were higher this year but they are a small proportion in relation to enrolment numbers. It was pointed out that positive comments from learners were not always passed on to the Quality Team.

VD stated that the under-performing HE programmes were now showing signs of significant improvement adding that they would continue to be monitored.

VD stated that all the reports had been reviewed, noted and approved by the Committee.

### **Item 7 – Report from the Finance, Business & Development Committee**

SB (Committee Chair) gave an overview of the meeting stating most had already been covered in the mid-year review presentations. He stated that following a detailed discussion in the Terms of Reference the Committee had agreed to approve the Terms of Reference and recommended the quorum to be at least 2 members excluding the Principal.

DN stated that the Board Committee quorum should be discussed more fully as certain Committees may need more than 2 or 3 members. It was agreed that this would be part of the Governance Review.

SB informed the members that the Committee had noted the funding changes and the implications of a reduced income stream next year.

SB stated that there had been a very detailed discussion regarding the disposal of various sites the Committee noted the report and agreed to recommend the disposal of all sites with the exception of the Riverside site and the Leasowes site. The Committee had asked for more information before these go ahead. Members discussed this proposal and made the recommendation for the Board to approve the disposal of the site with the exception of Riverside and Leasowes.

**Approved:** The Board approved the disposal of sites with the exception of Riverside and Leasowes until further information had been presented.

*Philip Heath left the meeting and Valerie Martin took over as interim Clerk*

### **Item 8 – Management Accounts**

SB reminded the Committee that this item was for note as BP had given a full overview of financial situation of the College in his Mid-year review presentation. There were no further questions from the Board,

**Approved:** The Management Accounts to 28 February 2014 were approved by the Board.

### **Item 9 – Report from the Audit Committee**

KJ (Committee Chair) informed members of the declaration of irregularities and that the Committee members were satisfied that the matter had been rectified and that the appropriate procedural measures have been amended accordingly.

KJ stated that there was an error in the date of the last meeting, should read 2013. She informed the members that the updated Risk Register has been presented. The Executive Team had been questioned on the evidence base and the mapping of the risks. The Committee had asked for more evidence and it was agreed that KJ would meet with BP and the Auditors to discuss these issues. It was agreed that the Executive Team would submit evidential documents at the next meeting on inspection and succession planning.

KJ informed members that the Auditors would be reviewing the harmonisation processes again and will be reporting back to the Committee in June.

KJ informed members that LJ had given the Committee a very detailed deep dive report on HR and that the Committee would continue to watch this area closely.

KJ stated that the Committee had some concerns with the Payroll report as it had thrown up some anomalies however PWC are to carry out a further review and report back to the June meeting.

KJ stated that PWC presented the Immigration Compliance report which showed that the testing carried out on Tier 4 students was fully compliant in all areas. KJ added that the Committee was pleased with the content of this report.

KJ said that PWC have presented the Building Digital Trust document for information only stating that the Committee need to be aware that security threats can come from anywhere. KJ suggested that it would be useful for all Board members to read the document and asked for it to be placed in Drop box. She stated that the Committee had asked the Executive Team to map the IT risks against this report.

**Action:** Building Digital Trust document to be placed in Drop box for all Governors to access.

**Item 10 – Report from the Framework Committee**

VD (Committee Chair) informed members that this was first meeting of the Committee and their aim was to review and monitor the performance and progress of the Corporation in relation to Strategic Framework and not to duplicate work of other Committees. The Committee had agreed that the framework needed reference to hierarchal documents and how these documents related to it and that JN would be working on this prior to the next meeting in June.

VD stated that it has been a very productive first meeting. DN agreed stating that good conclusions had been reached. CS added that the Executive Team needed to demonstrate that the activities are happening as this does not come over in the Framework.

**Item 11 – Any Other Business**

VD asked that CB congratulate staff on the fantastic opening of the Harborne Academy.

AMcC said he wanted to encourage members to visit the Professional Services Academy at Sutton Campus to see what

JW thanked the Executive Team for the presentations stating they were very informative and helpful to the members,

SH thanked members for their due diligence, insight and work within each of the sub-Committees.

Signed.....  
Chair

Date..... 10.7.14.....