

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Corporation
held on Thursday May 19th 2016 at 8.00am
at Matthew Boulton Campus**

Present:	Apologies:
Steve Hollis (Chair)	
Veronica Docherty (VD)	
Jenni Ord (JO)	
Kathryn James (KJ)	
Andrew Cleaves (Principal)	
Anthony McCourt (AMC)	
Andrew Madden (AM)	
Taher Hussain (Support Staff Governor) (TH)	
Dagen Thompson (Academic Staff Governor) (DT)	
Henry Millin (HM) (Student Governor)	
Sheetal Sahdev (SS) (Student Governor)	
In Attendance:	
Louise Jones - (LJ)	
Julie Nugent - (JN)	
Adrian Morris –(AMO)	
Helen Ainsbury (HA)	
Liam Nevin – (LN)	

Apologies for absence

No apologies were received.

Declarations of Interest

The Principal declared an interest in item 10(v) as a governor of Birmingham City University. He advised that he would leave the room for the item, more particularly described in the confidential minutes.

AmC declared an interest in item 7 as the branding agency concerned were a supplier to his company. The Company Secretary advised that AmC did not need to take any further action in relation to the declaration.

Item 1 – Open and Confidential Minutes of Meetings Held on 17 March 2016 and 29 April 2016

These were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Item 2 – Apprenticeship Development – Strategic Options

This matter is recorded in a confidential minute

Item 3 – Annual College Plan

LJ presented this item and explained to the Corporation that the Plan was in draft format and the final iteration would be presented to the July Corporation meeting at which point it would include the college plans, summaries of business support plans, the financial plan and risk

register. At this point the Corporation were being asked to approve the annual objectives and the targets.

SH proposed that a measure of student excitement would be appropriate and the Principal advised that this year had seen an increase of 13% in student satisfaction with a further 5% proposed target for 2016/17.

JO suggested that a clearer focus on staff quality needed to be reflected in the document. In particular recruitment and retention of highly skilled staff was essential to improving achievement and the quality of teaching provision. It was important that the Plan went beyond performance management of staff and also emphasised the importance of investment in staff and the quality of the work environment.

LJ advised that strategic objective four was concerned with these issues but agreed that assurance around the quality of recruitment was a point that needed further consideration.

KJ advised that it may assist in implementing and monitoring the plan if the input and output measures were separated and consideration given to how the former were driving the latter.

KJ further noted that a historic weakness of the College was in tracking student destinations which was an important success measure.

SH added that employment prospects was an important success measure, and it would benefit the College to know how many former students were entering employment in a given period. AM added that universities publish similar data and that the logistical challenges were not therefore insurmountable.

The Principal acknowledged these challenges and advised that the College was working with Warwick University to track student destinations over the next five years.

SH requested that details of the proposed staff communications be reported to the July Corporation. It was important that the Plan engaged all staff in its delivery.

Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

- **That the annual objectives and targets as set out in the report be approved.**

Item 4 – IT Service Strategic Options

This item is recorded in a confidential minute

Item 5 – Corporate Social Responsibility Policy

LN presented the draft policy statement and advised that adoption of a CSR policy was a requirement of the English Colleges Code of Good Governance. It was noted that the City Council had produced a Charter for Social Responsibility that was appended to the report. This was currently being considered and the Corporation were advised that any amendments to the College's CSR necessary to comply with the Council's charter would be reported back to it.

AM suggested that the statement be amended to specifically reflect the obligations of the College to students, and it was agreed that the priorities reflected in the Teaching and Learning Strategy be used for this purpose.

Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

- That the CSR policy statement be approved subject to a greater emphasis on obligations to students as set out in the preamble to this minute.
- That any proposed amendments to the CSR policy statement to ensure compliance with the Council's CSR Charter be reported to the Corporation.

Item 6 - Higher Levels Skills Strategy

JN introduced the strategy and reminded the Corporation of the review of HE provision that had been debated at previous Corporation and Committee meetings and which had informed the final iteration of the strategy.

SH commended the strategy and added that relevant employer quotes within the document would lend further credibility to it.

VD stated that the document would benefit from addressing how the College would contribute to addressing specific skills shortages. JN assured her that this would form part of the focus of the strategy but would review the wording to ensure that it was clear.

JO asked the student governors to comment on how students felt about higher education study at the College. Both HM and SS commented that many students either did not know that the College offered HE courses or else were not clear about the courses being offered. HM thought that taster events would be a good idea and the Principal advised that whilst progression evenings were now being run he would be keen to get the views of the student governors on the further development of these.

The Principal reminded the Corporation that the impact of the strategy was targeted to take effect from 2017-18 by which point the HE sector would be subject to further competition and change as a consequence of the proposals set out in the recent White Paper.

Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

- That the Higher Levels Skills Strategy be approved and that progress be periodically reported to the Corporation.

Item 7 – College Branding

JN introduced the report and delivered a brief presentation setting out the work undertaken by Orb to review existing branding arrangements and to develop proposals that would improve clarity around brand architecture and the relationship between BMet and its constituent colleges, and bring consistency to the College brand identity.

AmC stated that he had in previous years raised concerns about the inconsistent and frequently changing messages around branding and that the proposals were positive with a sensible period to roll out the new arrangements.

VD stated that the proposals would largely retain the logo that was recognisable to people and this was to be commended.

The Principal emphasised that the proposals would support the development of college identities as this was an important component of local people feeling an affiliation with their local college.

AM queried the cost of the project and the Principal advised that the work had been undertaken at a modest cost within existing marketing budgets.

Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

- That the Corporation approve, that for branding purposes the College name be shortened to BMet.
- The refreshed brand (as detailed in the presentation) be rolled out in September 2016 as part of the College's recruitment cycle for 2017/18.
- That the new brand be phased in over a period of 3 years to manage the impact on reputation and cost.

Item 8 – Progress against the Quality Improvement Plan

AMO delivered a presentation summarising progress with teaching and learning in 2015/16, the application of the Teaching and Learning Strategy and reflections on the recent Ofsted support visit.

The meeting acknowledged that the pace of improvement in relation to the quality of teaching and learning was not currently adequate. JO stated that the strategy needed to focus on how weaknesses in English and Maths provision were being tackled, and also demonstrate a greater emphasis on STEM subjects. She noted that the strategy was focussed on performance management and monitoring and whilst this was important, there needed to also be an investment in staff development and encouraging creativity.

The Principal advised that the practice of giving notice for lesson observations was not proving helpful. It was important that observations were conducted without notice so that observers could see the quality of lessons as they were ordinarily delivered. He also reflected that too many lessons had been cancelled this year and the College must become intolerant of this practice. Moreover, tutorials were not being utilised properly as a management practice and there would be a renewed focus on compliance with this.

VD questioned whether the quality of resources on Moodle had been reviewed and HA advised that this was a key area for improvement in 2016/17 as the quality of provision was unimaginative.

The Principal summarised the five point plan within the Teaching and Learning Strategy and advised that the comments made by governors would feed into ensuring that the plan was given greater clarity and focus.

Accordingly it was

RESOLVED

- That progress against the Quality Improvement Plan be noted.

Item 9 – College Performance

This item was deferred for consideration at the July meeting

Item 10 – Report of the Chair of the Finance Committee

This report was deferred until the July meeting save for item 10(v) and 10 (vi) which are recorded in a confidential minute.

Any Other Business and Governor Confidential Discussion

This matter is recorded in a confidential minute

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 21 July 2016.

Signed.....

Chairman

Date..... 3 August 2016

