

## **EXETER COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION**

### **CORPORATION BOARD**

**Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2015 in the Boardroom, Hele Road, Exeter College**

<b>Present</b>	Philip Bostock Richard Atkins David Allen Bindu Arjoon David Batho John Bunting Michael Caines Chris Hoar Elaine Hobson Rachel Hutchinson James Jefferson Craig Marshall	Chair Principal
<i>To Item 5</i>	Jo Matthews Matt Roach	(Co-optee invited to observe)
<i>To Item 7.8</i>	Cameron Seymour Tim Tamblyn Dave Underwood Emma Webber	
<b>Apologies</b>	Ian McGregor Martin Owen John Coombs	(Co-optee invited to observe)
<b>In Attendance</b>	John Laramy Steve Campion <i>To Item 5</i> Rob Bosworth <i>To Item 5</i> Emma Fielding <i>To Item 5</i> Ian Fitzpatrick <i>To Item 5</i> Malcolm Walsh Barbara Sweeney	Vice Principal Executive Director, Finance and Enterprise Assistant Principal Assistant Principal Assistant Principal Assistant Principal Clerk to the Corporation

- Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest** **Action**

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting. He particularly welcomed Jo Matthews, co-opted Governor, attending as an observer

and invited her to contribute fully to discussion.

Apologies were received.

Bindu Arjoon declared an interest in item 7.1, Opportunities and Developments Register and item 7.6, Property Update, as Assistant Director, Exeter City Council.

Chris Hoar declared an interest in item 7.1, Opportunities and Developments Register and item 7.6, Property Update, as Partner, Foot Anstey.

## 2. **Minutes of Meetings**

- 2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2015, as circulated, were agreed and signed by the Chair.
- 2.2 The confidential minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2015, as circulated, were agreed and signed by the Chair.
- 2.3 The confidential minutes of the special meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2015, as circulated, were agreed and signed by the Chair.
- 2.4 The confidential minutes of the special meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2015, as circulated, were agreed and signed by the Chair.

## 3. **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising which were not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

## 4. **Overview of Petroc: challenges, opportunities and first priorities.**

This item was dealt with as a confidential item in accordance with the College's confidentiality policy and recorded in the confidential minutes.

## **Part 2 ITEMS RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL**

### 5. **Recommendations from Audit Committee**

#### 5.1 Risk Management: Revised Risk Register

The report, including the revised Risk Register and Heat Map was received and considered. Steve Campion, Executive Director Finance and Enterprise, confirmed that the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) had reviewed and updated the Risk Register and Risk Heat Map prior to the opportunity relating to potential collaboration, but that it would be included in the next version. He highlighted the changes from the previous version and the Board discussed the rationale for the inclusion of a new risk.

The Board agreed to:

## **Approve the revised Risk Register and Heat Map**

*Vote: Unanimous*

### 5.2 Review of External Auditors

The report was received and the Chair of Audit confirmed the Committee recommendation to reappoint Grant Thornton for the 2014/15 external audit. The auditor's limited presence in the FE sector was noted.

The Board agreed

**To approve the reappointment of Grant Thornton as external auditors for the 2014/2015 financial year.**

*Vote: Unanimous*

## **6. Recommendations from Business Services Committee**

### 6.1 Cost of Living Pay Award

This item was dealt with as a confidential item in accordance with the College's confidentiality policy and recorded in the confidential minutes.

## **Part 3 REPORTS AND MINUTES FOR INFORMATION**

### 7. Reports

#### 7.1 Opportunities and Development Risk Register

This item was dealt with as a confidential item in accordance with the College's confidentiality policy and recorded in the confidential minutes.

#### 7.2 Principal's Report

The report was received and the Principal highlighted the key issues. The College had undergone a rigorous three day external QAA Higher Education Review inspection. The outcome would be known on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2015, and the HE team had worked hard preparing for, and during the inspection and was commended by the Committee. The 19+ Governor had been heavily involved in the process.

Applications were down as anticipated, because of the fall in demographics. However the numbers interviewed had been maintained, which was encouraging. The Board asked about the impact of the new Maths and Science Centre on recruitment. There was anecdotal evidence of a positive effect.

**The Board noted the report.**

7.3 Management Accounts  
The report was received and Steve confirmed that the accounts had been scrutinised by the Business Services Committee prior to the decision on the cost of living pay award. Today's Board decision would have a positive impact on the end of year forecast. Steve reminded the Board that the mid-year update had been undertaken in November in order to address the deficit and to effect remedial action, and a break even outturn or even a small surplus was forecast.

Income was better than budget at £38,230k. Forecast income was better than budget. Current capital projects meant that cash reserves were challenged and there was careful planning to draw down on the loans.

The Board questioned student travel costs. The contribution from Devon County Council would increase this year for the first time, which might reduce the deficit. Although efficiencies would be welcomed, with the demographic downturn in the city, recruitment from rural areas was important, which relied on travel support.

**The Board noted the accounts for February 2015.**

7.4 Business Efficiency Group update  
This item was dealt with as a confidential item in accordance with the College's confidentiality policy and recorded in the confidential minutes.

7.5 Commercial Opportunities Update  
This item was deferred.

7.6 Property Update  
This item was dealt with as a confidential item in accordance with the College's confidentiality policy and recorded in the confidential minutes.

7.7 Student representative Committee update  
The report was received and the Chair commended the quality of the updates. The 19+ Governor confirmed the significant focus on the recent HE review. A change in structure of the Student Representative Committee would result in greater cohesion in Board reports as the 16-18 and 19+ governors worked more closely.

The 16-18 Governor updated the Board on his attendance at the NUS conference. More politically active than the SRC, he highlighted the key elements of the NUS manifesto.

**The Board noted the report.**

7.8 Progression and Employability Update

The report was received and the Chair of Quality and Standards confirmed that there had been a significant increase in activity and in UCAS applications. The College had placed 10% of students over the national average, which was attributed to the team's one to one support for applicants, including reviewing all personal statements.

The Quality and Standards Committee had challenged internal progression of apprenticeships. The reduction in targets was justified until there was more historic data, because of a lack of benchmarking data.

### **The Board noted the report**

7.9

#### Aplus Update

The report was received. The Chair of Quality and Standards confirmed that the Committee had requested the report as assurance of progress since novation of the contract. The Committee had commended the hard work. There was compelling evidence of provision being turned around, and whilst it had always been acknowledged that this would take time, good progress had been made.

### **The Board noted the report**

7.10

#### Prevent Update

The report was received and John confirmed that the College had been working hard to make sure that it met the new statutory *Prevent* duty, which was introduced as part of the government's Counter-Terrorism and Security Act. This required the College to have procedures in place to prevent people being drawn into terrorism. The Act would receive Royal Assent in the summer, but in readiness the College had developed an action plan, training schedule and draft strategy which would require Board approval. Partnerships with police and community agencies were in place and had been effective and responsive to the first incident at the College. As a consequence, police had provided training for students in the College.

Governors noted that the agenda not only related to terrorism, but also to extremism of any kind. Action to prevent incidents must be balanced with freedom of speech. John confirmed that support for staff was geared to equipping them to handle incidents, not to suppress them.

It was confirmed that there would be a requirement to have a dedicated Prevent Governor. As part of the safeguarding agenda it was proposed that the current Safeguarding Governor take on the role. This would be a Board appointment and the recommendation would be considered at the Search and Governance meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2015.

There would be training for all Board members at the July Board, but a

number of Governors would receive the full four hour training at the College Leadership Team away day.

**The Board noted the report.**

- 7.11 Tutoring, enrichment & wellbeing annual review  
The report was received and John confirmed that there was a range of activities offered by the team which were formerly managed centrally. This included the administration of bursaries.

There was a 70% increase in counselling at no additional cost due to the introduction of fifteen minute drop in sessions in addition to the full 45 minute consultations. There was also a signposting service to refer learners on to the appropriate agencies.

The Board was reminded of the strength of leadership in the team. Managers must be mindful of this with an imminent retirement.

**The Board noted the report**

- 7.12 HR Policies (approved by Q and S)  
The following Policies were received and approved by the Quality and Standards Committee at its meeting on 27 April 2015. Key amendments were due to a change in legislation.
- Flexible Working Policy – scheduled review
  - Pensions Policy – scheduled review
  - Family Friendly Policy - updated version approved with amendments
  - Recruitment and Selection - updated version approved with amendments

**The Board noted the report**

- 7.13 Exeter 4 Learning report  
The Chair of E4L confirmed that maintaining effective partnerships within the City was important but often challenging, with some unilateral decisions taken without consultation.
- The annual conference was scheduled for 1<sup>st</sup> July 2015 and would be an interactive session discussing the implications of the General Election outcome.

**The Board noted the report**

- 7.14 Governance Report and Sealings Report  
The report was received and the Clerk thanked Governors for their commitment to the new appraisal process, with 100% engagement.

She highlighted some recent key publications from the Association of Colleges and which had been uploaded onto the electronic library. The Search and Governance Committee would consider the Code of Good Governance for English Colleges at its meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2015, and if content, recommend to the Board at its next meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2015.

The Sealing report was received and **noted**.

**The Board noted the report.**

**8. Minutes**

The following minutes were received and noted.

Search and Governance Minutes 19<sup>th</sup> January 2015 *Draft*  
Business Services Minutes 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2015 *Approved*  
Quality and Standards Minutes 9<sup>th</sup> February 2015 *Approved*  
Audit Committee Minutes 11<sup>th</sup> March 2015 *Draft*

**9. Confidential Minutes**

The following confidential minutes were received and noted.

Search and Governance Confidential Minutes 19<sup>th</sup> January 2015 *Draft*  
Business Services Confidential Minutes 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2015 *Approved*  
Audit Committee Confidential Minutes 11<sup>th</sup> March 2015 *Draft*

**10. Date of final scheduled meeting for 2014/2015**

Friday 8 July 2015

**Date of Special Meeting for 2014/15**

Monday 20 July 2015  
at Petroc Mid Devon Campus, Tiverton

**Dates of scheduled meetings for 2015/2016**

Friday	9	October	2015
Friday	11	December	2015
Friday	12	February	2016
Friday	6	May	2016
Wed	6	July	2016