



## FE Corporation Minutes

Meeting held on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2018 at 5.30pm in the Maureen Taylor Conference Suite, SRC Two

*Governors:* Subhash Chaudhary, Phil Cook (Chief Executive and Principal), Louise Davies, John Lowther, Russ McCallion, Rob Mitchell, Georgia Overton, Richard Poundford, Dot Smith, Alys Tregear (Staff Governor and Group Deputy Head of Student Services), Mark White, Norma Wilburn and Gary Wright.

*Officials:* Liz Boynton (Head of Quality), Jason Faulkner (Campus Principal, RCC), Mark Flannery (Director of Marketing), Lesley Graham (Campus Principal, SRC), Phil Hastie (Executive Director, Planning and Infrastructure), Mick Hickey (Executive Director, Quality and Standards), Adam Howe (Governance Support Officer, minutes), Mandy Morris (Vice-Principal, Curriculum and Development), Gary Potts (Director of Business Engagement), Ben Robinson (Campus Principal, Bede), Fiona Sharp (Executive Director, Finance) and Sarah Thompson (Clerk to the Corporation)

*Apologies:* Michael Duffey, Rebecca Hodgson, Rob Mitchell and Reece Readshaw  
No apologies were received from Sam Beel, Staff Governor.

*(Meeting commenced at 5.30 pm)*

---

### **18/117 Item 1 – Governing Body Membership**

The Chair spoke to the Clerk's report asking members to approve the appointment of one new member to the Governing Body. Members **agreed** to appoint Gary Wright as an external governor to the FE Corporation for a term of office of four years, subject to satisfactory DBS clearance. Members **agreed** to appoint Georgia Overton to the Standards Improvement Committee for a term of office until 31<sup>st</sup> July 2019. Members also **agreed** to temporarily increase the size of the Corporation to 19 to allow appointment of a governor with specific strategic finance/accountancy expertise.

The Chair welcomed Gary and Louise to their first meeting of the FE Corporation.

### **18/118 Item 2 – College Improvement Plan 2018 -19**

The Executive Director, Quality and Standards spoke on his previously circulated report which was accompanied by a suite of improvement plans. The Executive Director, Quality

and Standards highlighted that the improvement plan for English and maths identified that there were attendance issues in English and maths at the SRC Teesdale and NETA sites. Members noted that plans were in place to address this, for example, better timetabling in some instances. English and maths attendance would also be covered as part of the 'Learner Engagement Strategy'. The Vice-Principal, Curriculum and Development advised that the strategy was student focused. Members noted that the Vice-Principal, Curriculum and Development was working with the Campus Principal, SRC to develop a dedicated room for learners. The English and maths hub within the LRC would hold a drop in service for students to receive extra support. Members noted that the Campus Principal, SRC had engaged with students to ascertain the reasons they did not attend English and maths lessons. Letters had also been sent to parents explaining the work that was ongoing to support students with the aim of receiving additional support from parents.

A governor asked how English and maths has been promoted across the group. It was advised that new visuals for TV screens were being produced and that the Vice Principal, Curriculum and Development was visiting each site to talk to students.

Members **agreed** to **approve** the College Group Improvement Plan 2018/19.

### **18/119 Item 3 – Safeguarding**

The Director of Marketing spoke on this report, highlighting that as of 28<sup>th</sup> November 2018, 91% of staff had completed safeguarding training, those that had not were not required to do so yet, or were not at work. Members noted that post-merger there had been some changes to the safeguarding team. Mark Moore (Group Head of Student Services) was the safeguarding lead for Stockton Riverside College (SRC) and Alys Tregear (Group Deputy Head of Student Services) was the safeguarding lead for Redcar and Cleveland College (RCC). Welfare teams at both sites were now in place and all staff had been trained to use the Child Protection Online Monitoring System (CPOMS) which enabled the monitoring of safeguarding issues. Members noted that in terms of the declaration of unspent criminal convictions, 27 had been received for 2018/19 with two having been taken to the admissions panel for consideration and risk assessment. Members noted that one applicant was refused. A governor asked who was on the panel. It was advised that the panel included either the Group Head or Group Deputy Head of Student Services, depending on which site the application related to; the Head of Department; the Safeguarding team and any other staff that were deemed relevant.

Members noted that Welfare continued to be a big challenge, however a proactive approach had been taken [redacted]. Members noted that, in terms of Prevent, the College was monitoring search terms which could be tracked to the individual learner. Members also noted that issues regarding NETA learners' knowledge of who to go to with a safeguarding issue had been addressed and additional training has been provided on this.

The Chair asked the Group Deputy Head of Student Services if she had anything to add. She advised that since process and system had been introduced at RCC safeguarding had become more effective and this also meant that the group could work together on cases. The Campus Principal, Bede advised that the safeguarding lead at SRC Bede fed into the main safeguarding group.

Members noted that schools also used CPOMS which allowed the College to pull through data on learners prior to enrolment. A governor expressed concern at having to wait for updated NETA numbers and asked if the board would have to wait until December 2019 for the next annual update. It was advised that updated numbers would be reported at the next meeting but the governors had nothing to worry about. A governor asked if any analysis of safeguarding had been done at 'borough' level. It was advised that tangible information was accessible.

The Clerk advised that all governors appointed prior to September 2018 had completed safeguarding training and that those appointed after September 2018 were working towards completing it.

The Safeguarding Link governor advised that she felt things were going well and that there were no particular patterns identified. She also advised that the College was looking into creating further categories of concern for issues.

The report was noted.

#### **18/120 Item 4 – Equality and Diversity Annual Report**

The Vice Principal, Curriculum and Development spoke to her report highlighting that this year's report had been refreshed to make it more visual and celebratory. Members noted that the Equality and Diversity objectives had been reviewed and changed to reflect objectives that were achievable over time. Members noted that the second objective was to be removed as it focused too closely on SRC Bede. Members noted that there had been a decline in learner's access to free school meals and work needed to be done to ensure that all eligible learners were accessing them. Governors commented that they welcomed the refreshed look of the report and that it was a public document. A governor asked if the financial deprivation figures on page 17 were based on student figures. It was advised that figures were based on the whole population for Stockton and Redcar. Governors expressed concern that figures were so high and asked if it would be a similar picture for students at the college. It was advised that the analysis was still to take place but that Student Services would look into it. A governor advised that the financial assessment conducted on the basis of receipt of benefits showed that 80% of learners lived in households that were below the household income threshold.

A governor requested that on page seven of the report the table on ethnic group be changed to include Pakistani as part of the Asian/Asian British figures with a note to say that 2.2% of learners in this category were Pakistani.

Members **agreed** to **approve** the annual report for publication subject to minor changes that were discussed.

## **18/121 Item 5 – Stakeholder Feedback**

### **5.1 – Learner and Parental Feedback**

The Head of Quality spoke to her report on Learner and Parental feedback, highlighting that the Chief Executive's Learner Forum that took place in October 2018 had been the last one with a new format of Campus Principal Learner Forums to take its place. Members noted that the new forums had already started at Redcar and Cleveland College and SRC Bede, SRC Teesdale and NETA would start January 2019. Members noted that responses were low to the parent/carer survey having been completed by [redacted] respondents in 2017/18, however, this was an increase [redacted] on the previous year. Members noted that a new strategy to combat this would be launched in January.

The Chair asked the Campus Principal, Redcar how the learner forums had gone. He advised that they had gone well, a scoring system was used and scores had improved on last year with students now scoring eight/nine out of ten instead of the previous score of four. The Chair then asked the Chief Executive how he would stay involved. It was advised that the Chief Executive would stay involved through reporting from Campus Principals.

### **5.2 Employer Engagement Feedback**

The Director of Business Engagement spoke on his report, highlighting the report was based on Stockton Riverside College, Teesdale and NETA. Members noted that employer satisfaction was high and that the survey was now electronic to allow an increased response rate. Members noted that, in the FE Choices survey, satisfaction was over [redacted] at SRC Teesdale and [redacted] at Redcar and Cleveland College. This had been influenced by good communication with employer and high quality delivery. Members noted that a new government portal has been developed which allowed employers to rate providers and could be completed at any time throughout the year. Members noted that positive responses had been received for SRC but that there was work to improve responses for RCC. The Chair asked the Director of Business Engagement what he was most pleased about. The Director of Business Engagement advised that he was most pleased about the increase in satisfaction levels at Stockton. The Chair then asked what the Director of Business Engagement was most concerned about. He advised that improving satisfaction levels at Redcar and Cleveland College was top of the list.

A governor asked who normally completes the employer survey. It was advised that it varied between employers but that it was normally the staff member that had worked with the learner.

Members noted the reports.

### **18/121 Item 6 – Recruitment Update (Verbal)**

The Director of Marketing advised members that the system was undergoing an update, therefore exact and up-to-date figures were not available currently. In terms of 16-18 recruitment, a target of [redacted] learners had been set by RO4. Redcar and Cleveland College had a target of [redacted] and was currently on [redacted] and was looking to continue growing this number. Stockton Riverside College target was [redacted] and was currently on [redacted] which was slightly below the target. Members noted that SRC Bede recruitment was lower than expected and the Campus Principal, Bede was working with feeder schools to address this issue. NETA recruitment was going well and had increased by approximately [redacted] learners on last year.

Members noted that early information regarding learners was being sought before enrolment to allow the College to build a bespoke support package to ease the transition from school to college. A trial took place with 70 students last year and the aim was to expand and work with more schools this year.

The Chair asked for an update on the marketing and recruitment teams. It was advised that at Redcar and Cleveland College marketing had previously been outsourced and that this had now been brought in house. A team of five had been put in place and a team of four school engagement officers had also been recruited. Members noted that the teams at SRC had stayed the same, however, they had undergone training and upskilling. The Chair asked the Campus Principal, Bede for an update on the work with feeder schools. The Campus Principal, Bede advised that work was going very well and there was a need to make an impact on feeder schools to ensure student recruitment numbers rose. A twilight event had taken place which allowed prospective students to visit Bede and tour the facilities and meet with the teaching teams. This had been received extremely well and resulted in a good reaction from schools. Members noted that a second twilight event was planned for February 2019 with a focus on careers.

Members noted that a provider for the group websites had been appointed and work had already started and was expected to be completed by the end of March 2019.

Members received and noted the verbal update.

## **18/122 Item 7 – Master Target Files**

The Executive Director, Planning and Infrastructure spoke to his report, highlighting that all targets were included as part of the Business Planning process and were part of the planning process for the group. He advised that if new governors would like a more detailed explanation of the Master Targets file, he was happy to arrange to meet with them. The Executive Director, Finance advised that the operating position for this year excluded the restructuring grant to reflect a more realistic operating position. The Chief Executive advised that the document showed transparency and that at the start of the year Senior Managers and Heads of Department signed the document to agree to the budgets and what will be delivered.

Members noted the report.

## **18/123 Item 8 – Corporation Minutes and Actions**

Governors **agreed** to:

- i) approve the minutes of the Corporation meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2018 as an accurate record for signature by the Chair;
- ii) note progress against agreed actions.

Members noted that the ongoing actions for governors that were not time limited, had been removed and placed as a separate section. The Clerk asked if governors still wished for the actions to remain there. It was **agreed** to remind governors of actions and review at the next meeting.

## **18/124 Item 9 – Subsidiary Company Board/Committee meetings and recommendations**

Minutes of meetings of the following committees and task and finish groups had been circulated:

- Audit Committee, held on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2018
- Joint Audit and Finance and Employment Committees, held on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2018
- Finance and Employment Committee, held on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2018
- Merger Implementation Group, held on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2018

As agreed at the governor workshop, 'Key Themes' from each committee had been provided in the form of a cover report that had been previously circulated.

Governors received and noted the minutes of the above committee meetings and **agreed** the recommendations.

## **18/125 Item 10 – Annual Reports and Final Accounts 2017-18**

Annual Reports and Final Accounts 2017-18 for the College and its subsidiaries had been circulated and governors were reminded that the documents had been recommended for approval at a joint meeting of the Audit and Finance and Employment Committees on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2018. Accounts for NETA had been approved at its board meeting on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2018. TVC accounts had also been approved at its board meeting on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2018 subject to a letter of support from Stockton Riverside College.

In line with the recommendations of the joint meeting of the Audit and Finance and Employment Committees, governors **agreed** to:

- i) approve the annual report and final accounts for Stockton Riverside College for year ended 31 July 2018 (Group consolidated accounts);
- ii) receive the financial statements for NETA Training Trust (consolidated) for year ended 31 July 2018 for inclusion in the Group consolidated accounts;
- iii) receive the annual report and final accounts for Tees Valley Catering for year ended 31 July 2018 for inclusion in the Group consolidated accounts;
- iv) receive the annual report and final accounts for Stockton and Billingham College for year ended 31 July 2018 for inclusion in the Group consolidated accounts;
- v) accept the audit findings report from auditor of the financial statements / management representations letter for Stockton Riverside College;
- vi) accept the audit findings report from the auditor of the financial statements / management representations letter for NETA Training Trust.
- vii) approve the annual report and final accounts for Redcar and Cleveland College for year ended 31 July 2018;
- viii) accept the audit findings report from auditor of the financial statements / management representations letter for Redcar and Cleveland College.

The former Chair of the Redcar and Cleveland College Audit Committee commented that he was pleased to see that the accounts showed that there had been no issues with financial processes and procedures.

## **18/126 Item 11 – [redacted] Unit Key Performance Indicators**

The Executive Director, Planning and Infrastructure spoke on his report and reminded members that normally a dedicated report providing a breakdown of outcomes would be presented to the Merger Implementation Group (MIG) and a summary report would be presented to the FE Corporation, however, on this occasion outcomes had been included in the report so that governors had sight of them. [redacted]

The Board congratulated the Executive Director, Finance and her team on the hard work undertaken in this respect.

### **18/127 Item 12 – Strategic Seminar**

The Executive Director, Finance presented the draft agenda for the Strategic Seminar which would take place on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2019 at Hunley Hall in Brotton. Members noted that the CEO of PD Ports had been invited to provide a guest speech on the first day of the seminar.

The Chief Executive advised that the Christmas Seminar taking place on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> December 2018 would emphasise the strategic aims and objectives of the group and convey to staff that the focus was on people. It was requested that all governors be reminded about the Christmas Seminar.

Members **agreed to approve** the proposed aims and objectives of the Governors Strategic Seminar.

### **18/128 Item 13 – Governance Update**

The Clerk spoke to her report, highlighting that governor attendance was satisfactory but should be monitored. The Clerk highlighted that the Education and Training Foundation had commissioned the Association of Colleges (AoC) to develop a full Governance Development Programme and asked governors to let her know if they were interested in taking part in the pilot.

Members noted that the two Student Governors, along with Dot Smith, John Lowther and the Clerk had attended the Regional AoC Conference in Newcastle on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2018. Dot Smith advised that she had enjoyed the conference and found the section on the insolvency regime very interesting, advising that colleges could now become insolvent. Ofsted also provided a session, however Dot felt no new information came to light from this. Georgia Overton advised that the morning session had very useful and had focused on how to be a Student Governor, engage in meetings and the value of the student voice. John Lowther had also enjoyed the conference and advised that the ESFA had suggested that 5% of colleges had fallen into the inadequate category. The discussion on the insolvency regime had been interesting.

Members noted the report.

### **18/129 Item 14 – Any Other Business**

The Executive Director, Finance raised one item of additional business and presented the Redcar and Cleveland College Self-Assessment Questionnaire for approval. Members noted that this was part of the year-end audit and part of the tidying up of pre-merger Redcar and Cleveland College Financial and Audit processes.

Members **agreed to approve** the document.

A governor expressed her delighted at the excellent VIP Performance of Miracle on 34<sup>th</sup> Street and asked the Campus Principal, SRC to pass on the feedback to the relevant staff and the cast.

Governors thanked Adam Howe, Governance Support Officer, for his contribution to the work of the Corporation and its committees during his time in post, and wished him every success with his future plans.

#### **18/130 Item 15 – Approval of Document for Public Inspection**

It was **agreed** that the agenda and supporting documents of the current meeting be made available for public inspection with the following exceptions:

- Governor application forms, which included personal information
- Committee meeting minutes pending committee approval.

#### **18/131 Item 16 – Date, Time and Venue of next meeting**

Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2019, 5:30pm at the Skills Academy in Billingham.

#### **18/132 Item 17 – Key Themes**

The Chair agreed the following key themes in liaison with the Clerk and Governance Support Officer:

- New governors were welcomed
- The College Improvement Plan was agreed
- Equality and Diversity Annual Report was approved
- Final Accounts were signed off
- Upcoming Strategic Seminar was discussed

*The meeting finished at 19:10*