



## FE Corporation Minutes

Meeting held on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2018 at 5.30pm at SRC Bede

*Governors:* Phil Cook (Chief Executive and Principal), Subhash Chaudhary, Rebecca Hodgson, John Lowther, Russ McCallion, Rob Mitchell, Georgia Overton, Richard Poundford, Reece Readshaw, Dot Smith, Alys Tregear (Staff Governor and Group Deputy Head of Student Services) and Norma Wilburn.

*Officials:* Phil Blewitt (Managing Director, NETA), Liz Boynton (Head of Quality), Jason Faulkner (Campus Principal, RCC), Lesley Graham (Campus Principal, SRC), Phil Hastie (Executive Director, Planning and Infrastructure), Mick Hickey (Executive Director, Quality and Standards), Paul Hiser (Director of HR), Adam Howe (Governance Support Officer), 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:* Sam Beel, Louise Davies, Michael Duffey and Mark White

*(Meeting commenced at 5.30 pm)*

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In the absence of the Chair of the FE Corporation, the Vice-Chair of the FE Corporation chaired this meeting. All members were welcomed with particular emphasis on welcoming the new Student Governors and a round of introductions was made. Members were also reminded that it was the current HR Directors last meeting and that time had been allocated at the end of the meeting to thank him for his hard work and say good bye.

### **18/103 Item 1 – Governing Body Membership**

The Clerk spoke on her report asking members to approve the appointment of three new members to the Governing Body and one new co-opted member to the Standards Improvement Committee. Members **agreed** to appoint Louise Davies as an external Governor to the FE Corporation and as a member of the Finance and Employment Committee for a term of office of four years, subject to a satisfactory DBS. Members **agreed** to appoint Georgia Overton and Reece Readshaw as Student Governors to the FE Corporation for a term of office until 31<sup>st</sup> July 2019. Members **agreed** to appoint Eleanor Barwick as a co-opted member to the Standards Improvement Committee for a term of office to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2019.

A Governor asked if Student Governors had shown any interest in joining committees. It was confirmed that this was yet to be discussed.

### **18/104 Item 2 – Corporation Minutes and Actions**

Governors **agreed** to:

- i) approve the minutes of the Corporation meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2018 as an accurate record for signature by the Chair;
- ii) note progress against agreed actions.

The Chair challenged the Action register, drawing attention to a number of actions that were ongoing and would remain that way e.g. governors to advise Governance Team of attendance at events. It was suggested that these either be removed or added as a reminder in future action lists. The Clerk to the Corporation **agreed** to look into this outside the meeting. It was also suggested that the actions list needed to be reviewed and more clarity provided on how action updates are presented.

### **18/105 Item 3 – College Performance 2017/18 against Master Target Files**

The Executive Director, Quality and Standards spoke on his pre-circulated report and highlighted the following. High level achievements against targets set were good with the overall provision target being exceeded [redacted]. Achievement rates for 16-18 year olds and adult learners had made significant improvements since 2016/17, both being above the national average. It was noted that there was a significant task at course level on encouraging tutors to focus on individual learner achievement instead of the overall achievement. The following were highlighted as issues that required action: English and maths attendance levels; intermediate apprenticeships achievement rates had not been met; and A-Level linear outcomes were poor, however, AS outcomes and value added were above the national average. Members noted that SCIF (Strategic College Improvement Fund) funding was closely aligned to College quality priorities.

A governor suggested that, in terms of the English and maths attendance rates, it was advisable to look at colleges that had excellent attendance rates. The Executive Director, Quality and Standards advised that it varied across the country dependent on the model of delivery used and that as far as he knew there were no colleges known to have excellent attendance rates for English and maths. It was also advised that timetabling caused issues when attempting to schedule English and maths. A governor then asked if the use of incentives to attend had been considered. It was advised that at Redcar and Cleveland College students had the opportunity to win an I-Pad each term but that the issues with attendance linked back to attendance at school. The Vice-Principal: Curriculum and Development added that she had been looking at the issues around timetabling and attendance as part of the Learner Engagement Strategy.

A governor expressed concern at the final outputs figures, highlighting that employment figures were in red and asked if the targets had been miscalculated or was there another factor. It was advised that the targets were correct, it was due to the level of destinations data available and how the data is collected. The system needed to be developed to increasingly collect sophisticated data. It was advised that the Vice-Principal: Curriculum and Development was looking at this as part of the Destinations Strategy.

The Chief Executive advised that there was a lack of research behind English and maths attendance. At the recent Association of Colleges (AoC) Conference the shadow education minister suggested that the policy that required young people to study English and maths should be removed.

A governor suggested that the Governing Body should receive regular updates on English and maths targets and deadlines. It was advised that the Standards Improvement Committee receives these at each of its meetings.

The report was received and noted

#### **18/106 Item 4 – FE Self-Assessment Reports 2017-18**

The Executive Director, Quality and Standards spoke on his reports and explained to members that, due to the merger, the structure this year was different with two separate reports having been created, one for Stockton Riverside College (SRC) and one for Redcar and Cleveland College (RCC). However, going forward one single combined report would be created for 2018/19. Members noted that the overall judgement for SRC was 'good' and that the overall judgement for RCC was 'requires improvement'. SRC Bede and NETA were also rated as 'requires improvement'. Members noted that NETA and RCC had already made significant improvements at a rapid pace. Members noted that the areas of improvement in the Self-Assessment Reports mirrored that of the previous item. The Executive Director, Quality and Standards added that construction and engineering caused particular concern as did the counselling Access to HE course. Members noted that governors had been invited to attend the validation of the Self-Assessment Reports and that one governor had taken up this opportunity. The governor commented that the experience had been interesting and that a very realistic, robust and rigorous approach had been taken.

A governor made the following comments regarding the Self-Assessment Reports; it would be useful to pull together best practice from the reports and share across the College sites and then review the impact of this six months down the line; SRC's was good but more focus on learner behaviour would be useful. The Head of Quality advised that there were parts of the Self-Assessment Report for SRC that commented on learner behaviour but acknowledged that more could be included, however, in future reports a new framework would be in place and there would be a large section that focused on this.

A governor expressed concern that the RCC Self-Assessment Report highlighted the withdrawal of TTE and what had the impact of this been. It was advised that they had withdrawn due to poor performance and that TTE had already been subcontracting with others before the year end. Recruitment at RCC was good, therefore it has had little impact on the recruitment figures. There was also a positive relationship with NETA and SRC which allowed for an internal offer to be made to learners.

A governor commented that they were pleased with the Equality and Diversity section in the RCC Self-Assessment Report, noting the positive impact it had had on learners and the work with the community that had been achieved. The RAG (red, amber, green) rating of apprenticeships at RCC was queried as it had changed from 'Red' to 'Requires Improvement'. Governors asked why this had occurred. It was advised that this was due to this being below the national average. It was also advised that negative data was carried over from previous years which had an impact on the rating. A governor commented that paragraph 19 on page 18 of the RCC Self-Assessment Report was historic and read as the college got worse, what was the explanation behind this? It was **agreed** in order to provide clarity and address this that the Director of Business Engagement would produce a one side summary regarding apprenticeships and relate it back to the Self-Assessment Report.

A governor asked if the College acted on all of the 'key areas for improvement' highlighted in the SRC Self-Assessment Report would the College then be 'Outstanding'. It was advised that if this was done it would be a large step towards being 'Outstanding', however the new framework being introduced by Ofsted would impact this and depending on the final version of the framework the College may need to reposition itself. A governor asked when we would know what we needed to do for the new framework. It was advised that it would be sometime during the current academic year.

The report was received and noted.

#### **18/107 Item 5 – HE Self-Evaluation Document 2017-18**

The Executive Director, Quality and Standards spoke on his report. Members noted that the HE Self-Evaluation Document (SED) was a combined document for Stockton Riverside College (SRC) and Redcar and Cleveland College (RCC). Members noted that student satisfaction had gone down at RCC but had risen at SRC. Enrolment had gone down across both sites and needed to improve. A governor asked if there was an external examiner role for the HE courses. It was advised that Teesside University organised and provided the external examiners but that there was one for each course. A governor commented that the FE Self-Assessment Reports showed action plans for improvement but that the HE SED was not as clear. It was advised that the Higher Education Strategy that had been presented at the 11<sup>th</sup> October 2018 meeting covered this. Another governor commented on the difference between Ofsted inspections for FE and Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) inspections for HE. The QAA focused more on student representation in college governance, whereas Ofsted focused more on outcomes of governance.

The Chief Executive added that there has been lots of work done through the Higher Education Strategy and commented that the Local Authority has identified a great need for Higher Level Skills and that this needed to be driven up through Higher Education (HE). It was noted that the College needed to invest in HE over the next couple of years, in particular in marketing. A governor commented that the College seems to have a solution but had it been implemented? A clear action plan needed to be produced to show this.

The HE Assurance Statement was presented for approval and governors **agreed** the Chief Executive should sign it on behalf of the governing Body.

Members received and noted the report.

#### **18/108 Item 6 – Governance Self-Assessment 2017-18**

The Clerk to the Corporation spoke on her report, highlighting that there had been lots of positive feedback and outcomes from the Self-Assessment. A list of weaker areas/areas for improvement had been identified with proposed actions and was included in the report.

Members received and noted the report.

#### **18/109 Item 7 – Committee Task and Finish Group Minutes**

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

- Finance and Employment Committee held on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2018
- Search and Governance Committee held on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2018
- Standards Improvement Committee held on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2018
- Merger Implementation Group held on 8<sup>th</sup> October 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. The Chairs/Vice-Chairs of each committee gave a brief overview of these 'key themes'.

Governors **agreed** to receive and note the minutes of the above committee meetings.

#### **18/110 Item 8 – [Redacted] Key Performance Indicator Monitoring**

The Executive Director, Finance spoke on her report, highlighting that a strategy and action plan was in place. [Redacted] This report would be presented to the Merger Implementation Group on 6<sup>th</sup> December and then a summary would be presented to FE Corporation on 13<sup>th</sup> December. Members noted that the Executive Director, Finance was now able to start looking at variances. [Redacted]

Members received and noted the report.

#### **18/111 Item 9 – Committee Terms of Reference**

Members noted the circulated report regarding changes to terms of reference and **agreed** to approve the proposed amendments to the terms of reference for the Standards Improvement Committee.

#### **18/112 Item 10 – Any Other Business**

The Chair raised one item of Any Other Business. Members noted that a number of Senior Management had attended the AoC Conference in Birmingham and were asked to provide highlights.

The Campus Principal, Teesdale advised that she had met Steph McGovern and had invited her to the College for a visit and she had indicated that she would be interested in doing this. The Executive Director, Planning and Infrastructure advised that he had been to a session on funding and that it was suggested that funding issues would not be addressed until the spending review had taken place. The Campus Principal, Redcar advised that he had been to a session on T-Levels and there had been a discussion around the impact of implementing these in rural areas where there was no industry to support them. Finally the Chief Executive commented on how the conference had focused on the importance of acknowledging the world around us and how it was changing.

A governor commented that it was important for the College group to have a clear picture of where they wanted to be strategically and then utilise the Local Authority and political streams to access funding. The Chief Executive commented that the College group had excellent relationships with the Local Authorities.

#### **18/113 Item 11 – Approval of Documents 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 and Remuneration Committee recommendations, which included personal information
- College performance against master targets, as performance data would be published once validated on a national basis
- Further Education Self-Assessment reports, Higher Education Self Evaluation documents and Transaction Unit Key Performance Monitoring information, which were deemed commercial in confidence;
- Committee meeting minutes pending committee approval.

#### **18/114 Item 12 – Date and Time of Next Meeting**

The next meeting would take place on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2018 at 5:30pm in Room 301 at SRC Teesdale

#### **18/115 Item 13 – Key Themes**

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

- New Governors were welcomed
- College Performance was discussed and reviewed
- Positive Self-Assessment Reports were received and discussed

#### **18/116 Item 14 – Remuneration Committee Recommendations (Confidential to governors excluding staff and student members)**

*This item was deemed confidential to governors excluding staff and student members and is included in the Confidential Appendix.*

*The meeting finished at 19:25*

The Vice Chair thanked Paul Hiser (HR Director) for his continued service to the college and wished him well in his retirement on behalf of the Chair and governors. The Chief Executive also thanked Paul on behalf of the College and the Senior Management Team noting that he had been a huge part of the organisation. Paul thanked colleagues and governors for their support over the last six years and noted that he had been proud to see the governing body get stronger, how he had felt fully supported in his role and how he was proud that the merger with Redcar and Cleveland College had gone ahead.