

News from the FE Corporation meeting, 26 March 2019

Governor Appointments

Governors appointed Mati Scarlat, Level 1 ICT and Business student, to the remaining student governor vacancy.

Governors also appointed Tom Lee-Gough, a financial controller with Lane 7, as a co-opted member of the Audit Committee and reappointed Pat Howarth and Val Bailey for a second term of office from September 2019.

Governors are continuing to seek a person with accountancy expertise to join the full Governing Body.

Governors also welcomed Mike Chapman to his first Corporation meeting in his role of Assistant Principal.

Curriculum Department presentation

Governors received a presentation from Maria Harrop, Curriculum Manager, Service Industries and Sport. Maria highlighted the positive retention, attendance and predicted achievement levels across the department, as well as the range of new developments. Governors were pleased to note the opportunities available to students to learn from local top chefs and to participate in a visit to New York.

Hollie Ball, governor, had undertaken a learning walk around the department and commended, particularly, the success of apprenticeships in hair and beauty and links with the business community.

Governors congratulated the team on their successes and expressed their appreciation for the positive work that staff were undertaking with students.

Strategic Plan

Governors reviewed progress against the plan, noting the challenges in balancing funding against demand in a time of uncertainty, particularly in relation to apprenticeships and adult education budget provision. Governors also noted the likely impact of a new Ofsted inspection framework from September 2019 and would consider this in further detail at a Governor Strategy Event in April.

Governors also agreed proposals in relation to the establishment of an in house delivery team to deliver employability training, in order to fill the gap resulting from Working Links, one of the college's largest subcontractors, being placed in administration

Quality

Governors received an update from the Quality and Standards Committee, at which Alan Jones, Curriculum Manager for Engineering, Design, Automotive and the Arts, had provided a presentation, and governors were pleased to note that good progress was being achieved. The committee had also discussed at length the mental health support available for young people in the area and had asked the college to raise concerns with the Local Authority and MP for Darlington.

Governors also considered the Quality Performance report and were pleased to note that the overall picture continued to be very positive. Governors also received an update on curriculum

planning and recognised that no significant changes were planned, although an additional Public Services higher education qualification would be offered.

Governors considered issues highlighted by students at the Student Liaison Committee meeting and recognised that these were very reasonable. A large number of issues had now been resolved, including purchase of equipment, repair of lockers and improved lighting in the car park.

Financial Matters

Governors received an update from the Finance, Estates and Employment Committee meeting which had considered progress with the college capital programme, and estates, HR, health and safety and IT updates and strategies. The committee had also considered the impact of increases to the employer's contribution rate for the Teachers' Pension Scheme and approved gender pay gap information for publication.

The Corporation also considered the February management accounts and were pleased to note the forecast for a reduced budget deficit, thanks to careful control by budget holders and increased apprenticeship income. Governors were very pleased to note a positive picture for student recruitment for 2019-20.

Governance Matters

Governors reviewed their attendance at meetings and development activities and received information about national governance developments. Governors also approved a Governing Body Action Plan and updated a range of policies and governance documentation, and agreed to adopt the 'Remuneration Code for Senior Post Holders' issued by the Association of Colleges.

College Energy Centre

Governors received information about an opportunity to bid for funding to support the development of an energy centre on the college campus, supplying heat and power to the college and potentially other buildings on Central Park. After discussing proposals in detail, governors agreed to continue to pursue the opportunity at this time and consider further at the next meeting. A group of governors also agreed to provide input and support to college staff leading on this project.

Remuneration Committee

Governors received an update from the Remuneration Committee on their review of senior post holder performance and remuneration.

Governors recognised the continuing hard work of all staff and students in maintaining the positive quality and financial position of the college.

Best wishes from the Board

Pat Howarth, Chair

Kate Roe, Principal