



**MINUTES OF THE TRC  
FULL CORPORATION MEETING**

**MONDAY 5 DECEMBER 2016**

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**PRESENT**

Mr P Jagger MBE (Chair); Ms J Collier (Vice Chair); Ms M Allen; Mr M Chaudhary; Mr R Gray; Mr S Kirk; Dr P R Williams; Mr J Ellis; Mrs A Todd; Mr T Mulroy; Cllr D Roche; Mr T Grice

**In Attendance:**

Mr M Patterson, Vice Principal Finance & Resources; Mr T Dowling, Vice Principal Teaching & Learning; Mrs S Martin, Clerk

**APOLOGIES**

16.106 There were no apologies

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

16.107 Members were reminded of the need to declare any interests and reserved the right to declare an interest at any stage of the meeting.

- Mr T Grice reminded the corporation of his part time employment at Allotts Business Services Ltd.
- Mr P Jagger reminded the corporation of his position as Vice-Chair of the Barnsley College Board of Governors.

**MINUTES**

16.108 The Minutes of the Meetings (Part I and Part IIB) held on 14 November 2016 were agreed as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair.

**MATTERS ARISING**

16.109 The Corporation received a list of actions arising from previous meetings and members noted that items were either complete or ongoing.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

16.110 Any other business was agreed as:  
- October 2016 management accounts  
- Financial Health Grade  
- Teaching staff pay agreement 2016/17

**MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS**

16.111 The October 2016 management accounts were presented to members with no areas for concern.

The October management accounts were noted.

## **FINANCIAL HEALTH SCORE**

16.112 The VP F&R presented members with a copy of the letter received from the Education Funding Agency, confirming the assessment grade as outstanding for 2015/16 (the latest outturn forecast year) and outstanding for 2016/17 (the current budget year).

Members commended the positive outcome and thanked all staff involved.

16.113 Mr J Ellis queried the criteria to be met in order to achieve an outstanding judgement and this was explained. This led to a discussion regarding student numbers and the impact on the 2017/18 budget resulting from the number of students dropping out ahead of the census date in 2016/17 being higher than planned. The VP F&R confirmed that savings will be necessary in order to adjust the financial plans for the next two years to account for the fall in numbers. Members also questioned the reasons for students choosing to drop out leading to further discussion of the numerous possibilities.

The Chair requested that a paper be presented at a future board meeting providing more detail on the trends and underlying reasons for students dropping out along with the learning points.

The Principal also pointed out that retention in the period since the census date matched the best ever recorded.

## **TEACHING STAFF PAY AGREEMENT 2016/17**

16.114 The Corporation noted that a teaching staff pay increase for 2016/17 has been agreed at 1% to take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017.

## **AUDIT COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

### **16.115 Verbal report of the Audit Committee meeting held on 5 December 2016**

Having been held just before the Corporation meeting, Mr M Chaudhary (Vice Chair, Audit Committee) with input from the VP F&R gave a verbal report of the discussions that had taken place during the audit committee meeting drawing attention to the key recommendations.

### **16.116 Report of the Audit Committee to the Corporation and Accounting Officer**

Based on the findings and the opinion of the internal auditors, the Committee was able to provide an opinion to the Corporation that the College had an adequate and effective framework of assurance in place for governance, risk management and control. The Annual Report of the Committee to the Corporation and Accounting Officer which confirmed the opinion and provided assurance to the Corporation to sign the Financial Statements, was presented for approval.

**RESOLVED 16.116 to approve the Annual Report of the Committee to the Corporation and Accounting Officer for year ending 31 July 2016.**

### **16.117 Financial statements and audit findings year ending 31<sup>st</sup> July 2016 and letter of representation**

The VP F&R provided an overview of the year-end financial statements along with the management accounts highlighting the £122,000 surplus within the 2015/16 management accounts before explaining the impact of transition to the new reporting standard - FRS 102, and the differences between the management accounts and financial statements resulting from this. Members noted the £815,000 deficit within the financial statements and

that it matched the deficit figure within the management accounts summary, acknowledging this figure being a result of the FRS 102 changes.

The audit committee had discussed the financial statements and audit findings report with Mr M Redfearn of Grant Thornton LLP, and were able to recommend both for approval by the Corporation.

**RESOLVED 16.117.1 to approve the Auditors Report and Financial Statements for the year ending 31 July 2016.**

**RESOLVED 16.117.2 to authorise the Chair to sign the Financial Statements and Letter of Representation on behalf of the Corporation.**

#### **AREA BASED REVIEW RECOMMENDATION**

16.118 Having been circulated with the agenda, the Chair presented a paper on the discussion points arising from the meeting held on 14 November 2016. This included further detail regarding the role of the members, composition of the board of directors, appointment of the Chief Executive, shadow roles during the interim period and the vision / aims of the MAT.

The Chair also spoke about a meeting he had attended to receive questions and comments directly from staff members, explaining that the meeting had been helpful and it was clear that the focus of staff concern relates to job security, employment terms and conditions and staff engagement. Mrs M Allen agreed that uncertainty and job security were the primary concerns of staff.

At this stage the Chair proposed that a resolution be passed to progress the completion of talks with potential partners for the formation of a Multi-Academy Trust, with an 'in principle' decision to be made subject to the satisfactory outcome of these talks and a final decision subject to due diligence and formal public consultation. This prompted considerable discussion with the key points summarised below:

- Mr J Ellis raised concern, stating that he didn't recall being asked to vote previously on which option to pursue. The Principal and the Chair responded by explaining the outcome of previous meetings and that the two remaining options are either to form a MAT or remain as an independent incorporated Sixth Form college.
- Some members felt they were still not fully informed of the advantages and disadvantages between the two options and requested independent strategic advice to be made available as soon as possible. After much discussion and numerous suggestions as to who could provide the independent advice, it was agreed to contact Allotts, as the internal auditors for the college, to request their input during the Corporation Away Day to be held in January. Furthermore it was suggested that the Principal of Solihull Sixth Form College might be contacted regarding a possible visit to TRC (Solihull are further along in the process of joining a MAT) as he may be able to offer some further insight to assist the corporation in making a decision. Following this suggestion some members commented that, whilst they are not against receiving further advice and guidance, it is very difficult to engage anyone with a truly independent view and there may be little more to gain from this than from the information presented over the previous year.

- Members agreed that any decision made to pursue the MAT option would be subject to successful negotiations and that along with the financial perspective it is crucial to ensure that the educational vision for the MAT is aligned with the vision for TRC. Members suggested that a meeting with the Heads from each of the potential partner secondary schools would be worthwhile. The Principal agreed he would try to make arrangements for their attendance at the away day in January.
- Mrs J Collier queried the outcome of any discussions held with the Regional Schools Commissioner. The Chair and the Principal confirmed that discussions had taken place resulting in positive feedback.
- Given that it would not be possible during this meeting to make an 'in principle' decision to complete talks for the formation of a MAT, the Chair proposed a resolution to agree that TRC should continue to pursue talks with potential MAT partner schools and asked for a vote by show of hands. The vote was unanimously in favour with the chair opting out of the vote.

**RESOLVED 16.118 to agree to continue pursuing talks with potential MAT partner schools.**

*Cllr D Roche left the meeting (7.05pm)*

- Mr T Grice stated that, owing to his ongoing questions about the possibility of TRC becoming part of a MAT, he would write directly to both the Chair and the Principal to express his views.
- The Principal concluded the meeting, commenting that it was only recently he had come down in favour of TRC forming part of a MAT, but given numerous factors concerning national post-16 funding and the local educational landscape it would be the best option for the successful future of the college.

**DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

16. The next meeting would be held on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> March at 5.30 pm.

Mrs J Collier suggested that additional meetings are likely and requested the Clerk and the Chair undertake a review of the 2016/17 corporation calendar and propose multiple options for any additional meeting dates to ensure the majority of members are able to attend.

The meeting closed at 7:25pm and remained quorate

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ 15.12.16 \_\_\_\_\_