

Minutes of the Corporation meeting held at the Barnfield Campus at 1800hrs on 13 March 2019

Present	Guy Ainsley	Richard Lewis	Matt Luheshi
	Mathew Messenger	Ben Stapleton	Phil Thompson (Chair)
	Joan Viall (Vice-Chair)	Gill Worgan (Principal)	Graham Wood
In Attendance	David York		
	Ralph Devereux (Clerk)	Gary Dixon (Interim DPQ)	Sarah Knowles (DP (P&D))
Observer	Eamonn McCarroll (DoF)	Chris Pearson (Dir (Strat & Corp Affairs))	
	Faheem Mir (Deputy Chair Central Beds College(CBC)) (65/18 on)		
Apologies	Richard Patmore	Lavinia Chelaru	Cath Gunn (Principal, Barnfield)

PART ONE

The Chair welcomed all to the first Corporation meeting to be held at Barnfield since the formal merger. The Principal explained that Cath Gunn had recently suffered complications resulting from a stay in hospital and she was now recuperating at home, she was likely to return in around a month's time.

63/18 ELIGIBILITY, QUORUM, DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

The apologies were accepted. No notice had been received of any Member becoming ineligible to hold office, the meeting was quorate and there had been no interests declared.

64/18 STANDING ITEMS

- a. The Minutes (Part 1 & 2) of the meeting held on 13 February 2019 were confirmed for electronic signature; the Clerk to Action. **(Action 1)**
- b. The Minutes of the Audit Committee (AC) held on 26 February were presented by the Committee Chair and were noted. There were some queries regarding the critical tone of the Barnfield Internal Audit Reports and possible future impact of the performance of the Departments concerned. Assurance was provided that the IAS reports, although significant, were largely historical and related to work completed some time ago, the situation had been clear in advance of the formal merger and effective remedial action had been implemented and was continuing; the issues would be resolved. Particular attention was being directed to the issues raised around Learner Number Systems in preparation for the IAS funding audits planned for May. There had been no associated significance in the "closed" session between members and the auditors, that was a standard agenda item.
- c. Outstanding Actions. All actions from the last meeting had been implemented or were in progress.
- d. Matters arising. There were no matters arising from the minutes.

e. Urgent Business. There was no urgent business requested, but in response to a query regarding inclusion of locally based members on the Corporation the Chair explained that a wide recruitment initiative had been active for some weeks and several informal meetings had been held. The Search Committee would formally consider three candidates on Thursday next week.

a. **The information was received and noted.**

b. **Actions had been identified.** (Table 71/18 below)

Faheem Mir joined the meeting with apologies for his late arrival. He was attending the meeting as part of the developmental partnership between WHC and CBC (Strategic College Improvement Fund (SCIF)); all then introduced themselves.

65/18 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The Principals report covered detail outside the scope of the agenda, it had been circulated in advance and was received; there were no items for approval. In discussion several points were considered further:

- a. Performance Dashboard. Details on the Dashboard were noted;
- b. Earlier that day a group from Luton Airport had visited Barnfield with a view to establishing a close and mutually rewarding partnership, including work placements, training provision and far wider issues. The meeting had been successful and it was a warmly welcomed development in the establishment of local links and in the raising of college profile;
- c. University of Hertfordshire. (UoH) Changes to the arrangements with UoH were explained and discussed, in response to a query confirmation was given that the minimum number of students was determined by the College and the fee model was more flexible than other Universities;
- d. Appointments. Revision of the staffing structure continued and two key appointments had recently been made: Tammy Nuthall as Director of Quality (DoQ) and Beth Taylor as Director of Student Services (DSS); and
- e. Money Laundering. Recent unpleasant incidents at the Watford Campus were discussed, essentially a small number of students had been pressured into releasing their personal details, the police were involved. Parents of all 16-18 students had been contacted and the students themselves had been updated by tutors. In response to a query, confirmation was given that all students received financial and wider money training as part of the "Modern Britain" syllabus.

The information was noted and received

BUSINESS ITEMS

66/18 STUDENTS

- a. Quality Monitoring. The comprehensive report considered progress towards qualification in:
 - (i) Further Education (FE) long qualifications and Value Added (VA);
 - (ii) English and Maths (EAM);
 - (iii) Higher Education (HE); and
 - (iv) Apprenticeships.

Each of the elements were considered separately and the associated narratives were supplemented by detailed tabulated data. Good progress was being made and a minimum achievement rate averaging 87% (excluding Barnfield) was confidently predicted. Process at Barnfield was progressing with alignment of monitoring and reporting to be completed from

August this year, but 15% of students are currently 'at risk' of achieving their qualifications and intervention strategies are in place to support them; further information would follow in the near future. In response to a query on how retention had been improved it was explained that greater focus had been on mid-range students that tended to "coast" and not centred on the less motivated traditionally monitored element. There was some feeling that approach may help with the difficulties associated with EAM. Internal inspections and the associated triangulation assured on the robustness of the processes. The prediction that overall (9-1) EAM achievement would be 81% and 78% respectively was noted although it was acknowledged that the important measure is the number of students gaining 9-4 outcomes. Predictions regarding this particular measures are currently significantly above national averages. This was a heartening, well-received report and all involved were thanked for their input.

- b. Work Experience. Students on Study Programmes were required to complete at least 30 hours of work experience, the importance of the employers understanding and including "support and stretch" in the workplace was emphasised. Currently 61% (2708) of students had engaged in the work experience (GAP), an appropriate level for this point in the year. Full detail of numbers by school had been tabulated, together with an impressive table of employers associated with each and the list of employers involved and their associated sectors was discussed. Work with integrating Barnfield into the processes was underway. Work with consolidating industrial placements was also on track to make the ESFA target of 198 by the end of the year. This was an excellent report and again members took comfort from the performance and recorded thanks to all involved.
- c. Student Destinations. Recording of student destinations now stood at 95% of the leavers having gained a positive destination, an impressive number, which was fully considered in the comprehensive paper. The information gained informed marketing activity and it was suggested should inform the Association of Colleges (AoC) in their lobbying of central government regarding the benefits of broad work-place experience. The level of return compared very favourably with that from professional marketing agencies whose average return was 65%. Leavers often stayed in contact with the College and if necessary continuing support was available; some schools had informal alumni groups. Consideration of establishing a College Alumni still progressed but higher priority issues had overtaken the progression.

The information was received.

67/18 COMMUNITIES

- a. Engagement Update. The Annual Community Engagement Report studied on how the strategy informed key strategic decisions and the future direction of the College; the recent merger and the vital purpose of re-establishing Barnfield in the local community was an essential core element. Members were conscious of the College Public Value Statement with the emphasis on contribution to local communities and society in general and the supporting guiding principles. The report, in two sections, one explaining the benefit of effective community engagement and the other how establishment of the new college was working. Explanation was included of how community engagement across SW Herts, Luton and beyond was proceeding, the strategy aimed at exchanging information, sharing intelligence and formulating ideas with a wide range of agencies. To inform on the changes in approach prompted by the merger the Dir(Strat & Corp Affairs) delivered an electronic presentation, which explained amongst wider issues, how the WHC geographical and demographic area of interest had been affected by the integration of Luton through Barnfield, for example, black, asian and minority ethnic (BAME) populations were:
 - a. Hemel Hempstead 17%;
 - b. Hertfordshire 20%;
 - c. Watford 28%; and
 - d. Luton 45%.

This, only a single element of the overall changed pattern, clearly indicated the necessity for flexibility and vision in incorporating Luton with associated differing educational and social priorities into the WHC family. The associated relationship between educational qualification and life income prompted change to local educational opportunities. Add to such widened responsibility the withdrawal of Barnfield from direct local involvement and the pressing need to re-establish such and the complexities of the task become clear. It was vital to establish new partners and that process had already been initiated, in particular with the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and Luton Borough Council (LBC). The council embraced a wide service provider role and it had already emerged that the involvement of many of them would be welcomed and should be mutually beneficial. It was agreed that more information of the extent of Luton contacts would be useful and this would be available at a future meeting. **(Action 2)** Members received the comprehensive report.

- b. Strategy. As had been considered above, the present Community Engagement Strategy was no longer fit for purpose, additionally the current political and economic uncertainties prompted a wide-ranging review. The previous Strategy had been included in the papers for information and background for the pre-review work a future Corporation meeting.

The information was received.

68/18 MEMBERS

- a. Barnfield. Members who had taken part in the learning walk around the Barnfield campus on Friday 8 March reported that the campus was markedly tidier than it had been on the previous walk. There had been opportunities for informal exchanges with staff and students, all of whom appeared relaxed, even excited by the merger process. Good teaching had been observed and the general impression was not of a struggling organisation albeit one with dilapidated and run down facilities.
- b. Watford. Joan Viall explained that her son had recently enrolled at WHC and described the induction process that they both had experienced was excellent, attentive and caring.

The information was received and noted.

69/18 URGENT BUSINESS.

There had been no urgent business requested.

70/18 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held at Watford at 1700 on 24 April 2019.

71/18 ACTION TABLE

Action 1	64/18. Last minutes (12.12.18) confirmed for signature.	Clerk	asap
Action 2	67/18. Full detail of Luton contact	CP	24.04.19

Ralph Devereux (Clerk) for Phil Thompson (Chair)

Ralph Devereux (Clerk) for Phil Thompson (Chair) (Apr 25, 2019)

5. CorpMins13.03.19 PT1RDGWPT

Final Audit Report

2019-04-25

Created:	2019-04-25
By:	Ralph Devereux (office.mpe@btconnect.com)
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAlly3hLS2kT-Ilaf8Y-gfWWts9dzxD6Vr

"5. CorpMins13.03.19 PT1RDGWPT" History

-  Document uploaded by Ralph Devereux (office.mpe@btconnect.com) from Reader
2019-04-25 - 12:48:48 PM GMT- IP address: 81.129.96.55
-  Document emailed to Ralph Devereux (Clerk) for Phil Thompson (Chair) (clerk.mpe@btconnect.com) for signature
2019-04-25 - 12:49:10 PM GMT
-  Document viewed by Ralph Devereux (Clerk) for Phil Thompson (Chair) (clerk.mpe@btconnect.com)
2019-04-25 - 12:59:58 PM GMT- IP address: 194.83.69.8
-  Document e-signed by Ralph Devereux (Clerk) for Phil Thompson (Chair) (clerk.mpe@btconnect.com)
Signature Date: 2019-04-25 - 1:00:44 PM GMT - Time Source: server- IP address: 194.83.69.8
-  Signed document emailed to Ralph Devereux (Clerk) for Phil Thompson (Chair) (clerk.mpe@btconnect.com) and Ralph Devereux (office.mpe@btconnect.com)
2019-04-25 - 1:00:44 PM GMT