

Colchester Institute Corporation

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Board
held on 9th February 2016
at the Sheepen Road Campus**

Present

Christopher Bridge, *in the Chair*
Brenda Baker
Lisa Clampin
David Gask
David Gronland

David Kerridge
Bryn Morris
Kevin Prince
Sue Thompson-Arnold
Richard Wainwright

In Attendance

Gary Horne
Hazel Paton

Vice Principal: Finance and Operations
Clerk to the Governors

Apologies for absence were received from Alison Andreas, Will Chapman, Peter Hempstead and Karen Tarling.

1. **Declaration of any Conflicts of Interest**

None.

2. **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15th December 2015 (CIC/16/1/1) were received and confirmed. The Chair signed the minute book.

The notes of the meeting with the College Management Group on 17th December 2015 (CIC/16/1/2) were received and noted.

3. **Matters Arising from the Minutes**

None, other than on the agenda.

4. **Chair's Announcements/Action since last meeting**

4.1. The Chair and the Principal responded to the consultation on the proposal to open a sixth form at the Tabor Academy in Braintree. Copies of the response are available on request. The response set out a reasoned argument why Colchester Institute could not support the proposal on the grounds of overcapacity in the town and that it would not be viable in terms of student numbers.

4.2. As reported in the Principal's Report, the most significant change in Government policy is the recent announcement by the Education Secretary, Nicky Morgan MP, that the careers information being given to Year 11 students is inadequate and that college staff should be able to go into schools to talk about apprenticeships and other professional and technical routes. This is something that the sector has been lobbying for and is welcomed. It is clear from the number of learners who join the College every year (about 100) after completing the first year

of A levels that they were not on the right programmes for them as a result of the quality of the careers information they received.

- 4.3. The Chair and the Principal met with the Chair of the LEP on 24th December. They also visited the Deputy Leader of Essex County Council. In both cases they were very positive and support the College's proposals for a STEM orientated campus at Braintree, albeit in a different form to that originally proposed.

5. **Principal's Report**

CIC/16/1/3, Principal's Report January/February 2016, was received and considered.

(i) **Area Reviews**

It was noted that the Area Review process is already behind schedule and that few recommendations have been published from Wave 1 as yet. It was reported at the FEDEC Principals group the previous week that the Local Authority is preparing data on school sixth forms for inclusion in the Essex Area Review scheduled for November 2016.

(ii) **South Wing**

It was reported that two floors of the South Wing are now in use and the building will be fully occupied by the end of February. The College was successful in a SELEP bid (round 2) for equipment two months ago and has just received confirmation that a round 3 SELEP bid for £200k for equipment was also successful. The College has been in discussion with Essex County Council regarding the matched funding and the College will only have to commit £50k on a total equipment spend of £400k. The equipment order has been prepared and is about to be placed.

(iii) **Key Performance Indicators**

Progress as at 1st February 2016 against the annual high level performance targets was noted. It was reported that the Ofsted Inspectors have recognised the improvements that have been made over the last 12-18 months.

The underperformance on 24+ loan income was discussed. It was reported that this is a sector wide problem and the full year forecast income will be reduced in the period 6 management report. Governors asked if this was because people are reluctant to take out loans or due to loans not being marketed properly and were advised that both were probably a factor. The age at which learners can access FE loans will drop to 19 from next year but it was though unrealistic that the College will be able to increase this income stream next year.

Learner attendance figures were discussed. It was reported that the figures for FE are being pulled down by attendance at English and maths. Attendance on the main programme is strong at around 90%.

6. **One Year Action Plan and Key Performance Indicators – September 2015 - August 2016**

CIC/16/1/4, Update on One Year Action Plan 2015-16, was received and noted. The progress towards the actions had been considered in detail by the Curriculum and Quality Committee (ambitions 1 and 2) and the Resources Committee (ambitions 3-5) at their last meeting.

7. Reports from Committees

7.1. Curriculum and Quality Committee

The minutes of the meeting held on 19th January 2016 (CIC/16/1/5) were received and presented by the Committee Chair David Gask.

7.1.1. Scorecard

The Committee had received an update on Scorecard. Scorecard was introduced for the 2015-16 academic year to provide live data on student performance and in year progress against College targets. The data is available as a management tool for staff at all levels to monitor progress, identify where intervention is needed and drive better outcomes for individual students. At the time of the Committee meeting, the predicted success rate (main qualification) was 93% against the College target of 88%. The level of confidence in the data was discussed and it was reported that the experience in other colleges is that the further through the year, the greater the confidence in the data. At this stage of the year the data would be expected to be $\pm 2\%$ and by the end of this term this will improve to $\pm 1\%$.

7.1.2. Value Added Results

Recently published government data on performance on vocational level 3 qualifications ranked the College 120th out of 240, a much improved position on previous years and a move in the right direction but more needs to be done.

7.1.3. Teaching and Learning Observations

The College has moved away from graded observations. Individual staff are given feedback on the content of the lesson in terms of achieving objectives, embedding English and maths, and student progress. There is still work to do in terms of embedding English and maths. A Governor reported that the embedding of English and maths was one of the subjects discussed during a recent link visit and asked if the College was doing enough to help staff in this important area. It was reported that the College has recruited well in this area and now has a committed team delivering GCSE English and math. Function Skills training is still within the faculties, embedded within vocational courses. The Learning Shop is working with the Centres to pilot a different way of delivering functional skills. Rather than the learner coming to lessons they can access a tutorial based system remotely.

7.1.4. HE Performance 2014-15 and update on 2015-16

The issues facing HE were discussed. It was reported that the external environment for HE recruitment is now quite challenging and needs to be scrutinised. The Dean of HE is actively engaging with the issues and carrying out an in-depth review of HE provision to ensure it meets the needs and aspirations of students. A huge potential growth area is internal progression from FE to HE and more needs to be done to ensure this is maximised.

7.1.5. FE Learner Destinations

The College had much improved data on FE Learner destinations this year and it was pleasing to note that of the students who did not continue in education, 90% had got jobs.

7.1.6. **Annual Report to the Board 2014-15**

CIC/16/1/6, Curriculum and Quality Committee annual report to the Board 2014-15, was received, considered and accepted.

7.2. **Resources Committee**

The minutes of the meeting held on 26th January 2016 (CIC/16/1/7) were received and presented by the Committee Chair Richard Wainwright.

7.2.1. **Management Report – December 2015**

CIC/16/1/8, Management Report December 2015 [Period 5], was received and considered. It was reported that after a poor start to the year the College is starting to recover the position and income in December was £0.5m above budget. Currently the College is forecasting a loss at the end of the year and work is underway to maximise income and reduce costs to try to achieve a breakeven. Action includes merging courses and reducing reliance on agency staff. The forecast year end position is still Satisfactory in terms of financial health grade.

It was reported that Barclays Bank has agreed in principle to a £0.5m overdraft on a short term basis but was not willing to extend their loan terms. This short term facility will cover a shortfall in cash in March/April when recurrent grant income is at its lowest and is needed because of overspend on the South Wing, under-recruitment this year, and adult funding clawback. It was agreed to proceed subject to the Chairman approving the terms of the Agreement. The College is also looking at options to take out a short term loan (3-5 years) with another provider.

It was reported that the Skills Funding Agency has confirmed that they will be lifting the financial notice of concern.

7.2.2. **Wellbeing Annual Report**

CIC/16/1/90, report on activity to promote staff wellbeing during 2015, was received and considered and the priorities for 2016 noted.

7.2.3. **Property Issues**

It was reported that on behalf of CIFT (Colchester Institute Foundation Trust) the College has put in a joint bid to the Colchester Borough Council Big Choice Fund. The proposal is to build a sensory garden and nature area at the back of the site when the LX demountable building currently located there is removed. The CIFT bid is one of 12 of the fifty received to be shortlisted. Winners will be selected via an online vote by local residence and if successful CIFT could receive up to £25k towards the cost of the project.

8. **Corporate Risk Register**

CIC/16/1/10, Corporate risk register – identification of key risks, was received. Governors were asked to identify what they see as the key risks facing the College over the next 12/18 months. The returns will be analysed by the College Executive and Risk Committee to see which risks have already been captured and which are potentially new risks for the College to manage.

9. **Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Corporation Board is scheduled for 11.00am on Wednesday, 20th April 2016. The meeting will be preceded by a presentation at 10.30am and followed by lunch in the Balkerne Room.

10. **Any other Business**

10.1. **Board Planning Meeting**

The Board planning meeting due to be held earlier that day was postponed due to the Ofsted Inspection. It was agreed to try to reschedule the meeting for an early evening meeting before the April Board meeting.

10.2. **University Centre Colchester**

It was reported that University of Essex has agreed that the HE Centre can be rebranded as the University Centre Colchester.