

**WEYMOUTH COLLEGE CORPORATION**  
**Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 12 November 2019**

<b>Members Present:</b>		<b>In attendance:</b>	
Richard Noah	<b>Chair</b>	Sue Ratcliffe	Clerk to the Corporation
Nigel Evans	<b>Principal</b>	Jenny Stiling	Associate Member
Rosie Darkin-Miller	<b>Vice-Chair</b>	Rob Cole	Director of Finance
Jane Nicklen		Phil Templeton	Vice Principal
Stephen Prewett	<b>Resignation received</b>	Julia Rogerson	Vice Principal
Steve Webb	<b>Not present</b>	Kelly Bush	Vice Principal
Andy Matthews		Jade House	Student Governor candidate
Lyn Bourne	<b>Apologies</b>	Lucas McCallum	Student Governor candidate
Rod Davis	<b>Apologies</b>	Louise Matthews	Associate Member Apologies
Peter Vowles		Joanne George	Audit Finance Committee Member Apologies
Jacqui Gerrard			
Megan Barnes	<b>Not present</b>		

7 members - meeting is quorate. 40% of current membership excluding vacancies.

**Apologies for Absence**

79/2019 Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Lyn Bourne, Rod Davis, Joanne George and Louise Matthews.

- i) The Chair welcomed the two shortlisted candidates for the role of student governor.
- ii) Members received with regret the resignation of Stephen Prewett. Members expressed their thanks to Stephen for his support to the College over recent years.
- iii) Change of Status – Louise Matthews –For health reasons, Louise has agreed to change her status to associate member for a minimum of 6 months.
- iv) Change of Status – Jo George – due to a change in her employment position, Jo has resigned as a full member of the Board but will become a co-opted member of the Audit Finance Committee to retain her experience on that Committee

RESOLVED the membership changes be approved. All in favour, no abstentions.

**Declarations of interest**

80/2019 Members had nothing to declare.

**Notification of Any Other Business**

81/2019 There were no items of other business.

**Minutes of the Meeting held on 1 October 2019**

82/2019 the minutes of the meeting held on 1 October 2019, previously circulated, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

## Curriculum Report

83/2019 The Principal gave an

- i) Overview of Curriculum Intent and Impact - Further to the presentation received at the last meeting when members discussed the suggested curriculum focussed questions for governors, the Principal reminded members that the College offered as wide a curriculum as is possible due to its location. He also gave further details on the process for the development of particular areas of the curriculum. In addition the link scheme puts governor involvement central to the curriculum together with input into the SAR and termly reviews. Members felt that Board consideration of LEP and local authority priorities and awareness of local skills shortages must also be emphasised. This was followed by a presentation, question and answer session on the Curriculum Planning Tool, following an overview of the School of Construction.
- ii) School of Construction – The Principal and Vice Principal Curriculum presented an overview of the School of Construction on behalf of the Head of School as he was delayed at a meeting out of County. The slides are on the GVO. The Board noted how the different elements of the school interacted between each other, different courses, apprentices, etc. Members also noted the very lean staffing position and discussed vacancies, particularly how they having been carrying vacancies in plumbing and carpentry for the whole academic year. Competition with other colleges, salaries that can be earned working in the sector and the Salaries the College can offer are all issues adding to a near recruitment crisis, in fact local colleges are head hunting. The situation is managed by Infilling full time and apprentices to make economic viability, which creates a complex teaching environment, but it is done in an efficient way. Members noted the progression chart, a construction event and strong student numbers in what is a complex area of full time, part time learners and apprentices.
- iii) The LEP bid is a positive boost for the team but the Principal expressed concern that efforts are being put into providing renewed resources but as we struggle with staffing as reported, the situation will just worsen and we will have a building with staffing issues. However, if we continue to meet demand, more space will be needed.
- iv) Curriculum Planning Tools  
The Vice Principal Curriculum explained how the curriculum planning process is undertaken each year starting on the Visioning Day, which also involves members of the Board. This provides top level numbers and then approval of courses to run, with a number of tools available for heads of schools. SLT will approve hours for each course and monitor applications and allocate staffing. Pivot table for staff hours explained. The Vice Principal Planning and operations gave demonstration of the 4cast programme and explained the College was an early user of the software after the SPA process and how this is now further developed with a live link to our own unit-planning tool. This shows tabs to our income from contracts, a Staff report which feeds the Payroll and is easier to monitor costs.
- v) Introduction of T Levels - The Board received a report from Jane Nicklen updating members on a recent seminar she attended. She encouraged members to look at the portal which is a free resource and confirmed a strategic decision is required on the future of T Levels at Weymouth College. The Principal acknowledged involvement in a Project with 3 other colleges, but he is conscious of the impact of change on staff and students. He reported we are evaluating it, but currently the only college not engaged.

Kris Thorn – Head of School arrived apologised for his delay and thanked everyone for viewing his presentation. Kris then left.

### **KPI Report**

84/2019 The KPI Report was received and handed round. It was agreed this would align with the quarterly return to the TU and noted the College had asked it reflect the CFADS model and to change curriculum targets to make them realistic. No response has yet been received.

### **Strategic Plan Meeting – Feedback**

85/2019 The Board received a report on the meeting of the sub group. Members were asked to feedback any additional points to the Clerk.

### **Response to Dorset Council Plan**

86/2019 At the Strategic Planning meeting it was suggested the College should respond to the Dorset Council Plan consultation. The principal to provide an update on progress at the next meeting. The consultation is open until 20 December 2019.

*Student governor candidates left the meeting.*

### **Financial Report**

87/2019

#### **i) P3 Report**

Members received the P3 report with the understanding that it is very early in the financial year and work is currently underway to present a budget reforecast in January 2020. The Director of Finance emphasised the work being undertaken to review contracts and identify savings, working to achieve an EBITDA of £480k, to service our debt. This will be a challenge and concern was expressed within the scenario of reduced 16-18 income due to the lag funding position in the current year. However, the position is looking more promising in 2020-2021. £511k is the opening balance but cash flow continues to be an issue for March 2020. Whilst we have the option to use the TU funding monies for 3 months in the year, we will most likely be in default for certain months in the year. The ESFA knows our position, but the outcome of the position is unknown.

Members:

- Noted that Income figures shown are conservative estimates, and more reliable estimates will become available during the year.
- Appreciated the early warning predictions and discussed income predicted increases in high needs income. The Vice Principal acknowledged historic issues but confirmed we have 20 confirmed additional learners with income to cover costs and suggested the focus of the relationship with Dorset Council has changed in that the College is now a partner working with the Council to cut their costs.
- Asked for a table showing opportunities and summary risks to be included for future monitoring reports.

The Board noted that a part of ongoing monitoring the ESFA, as part of the QI returns, have requested a variance analysis showing what has changed since the application to the TU and our refinancing contract.

The key issue is the strengthening of EBITDA and we have three choices - do we raise income, reduce costs or do nothing. Which route or a combination of the three? Members accepted that there is a

healthier budget coming in next year, with increased enrolment and the promised rise in base funding. All felt there will be no redundancies as redundancy is a cost. Members made it clear that the Interest we are now paying is not helping and reminded the ESFA that issues were raised, constraints were put on us and we didn't get what we needed – this is an awful year, we will breach the requirement to keep funds in our account for 5 months. We do well, we are proactive, so we do nothing and look to a more positive position over the next two years.

#### Trading Activities.

Members were pleased to see the detail within the report on trading activities and noted the current reviews are focusing on Redlands and the DCCA. Discussions are in hand with the local authority (leaseholder) concerning Redlands. Colleagues had a successful meeting with the Chief Executive to see if there might be a more positive outcome for the future after their review of local leisure facilities is concluded.

Audit of 2018-2019 Financial Statements update- The Director Finance presented a written report, previously circulated, explaining that the audit work is complete and the draft set of the accounts are with the auditors for review. Prior to presentation to the Audit Finance Committee on 26 November and the Board on 10 December. Members noted that audit went well, with very few audit issues to resolve at the conclusion of the College Accounts. The audit of the Weyco and [Redlands](#) Accounts were completed in September. The post audit result for each entity is:

- Redlands Community Hub Ltd – £219k loss (£99.5k loss in 2017/18). Moore (Audit) have noted concern regarding the financial reporting position of Redlands at year-end (but are aware of the pending closure of the company and ongoing discussions with Dorset Council).
- Weyco Services Ltd – £66k operating loss (£93.5k loss in 2017/18), with an actuarial loss of £65k, 131k comprehensive expense
- The Group is reporting a deficit of £1012:

▪ Deficit after interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation	£645
▪ Actuarial review on FRS 17 pension adjustments (non cash item)	£347
▪ Late invoices pick up prior to audit visit	£20

Members discussed the debt posted by Weyco and Redlands and considering the impending closure of the Redlands Company, the Board agreed a forgiveness of debt arrangement as in previous years, would be appropriate.

*Therefore as at 31 July 2019 Redlands Community Sports Hub owe Weymouth College £114,285 and Weyco Services Limited owe Weymouth College £195,671. Members agreed that based on previous experience and future forecasts these entities do not have a realistic chance of repaying these debts owed to the College. In acknowledging that both the Board and Directors of the subsidiaries are exploring all avenues to reduce the losses being incurred by both Weyco and Redlands and Following further discussion the Board RESOLVED that the debt owed to it by Weyco Services Limited and Redlands Community Sports Hub Limited as at 31 July 2019 will be forgiven.*

Appropriate authorisations will be provided to the auditors. And In addition a letter of support for Weyco Services will be provided.

## **Principals Report and LEP Funding Bids Update**

88/2019

- i) Motor Vehicle Project The Principal confirmed that the Motor Vehicle Project was on track, with the official opening event on Friday 15 November.
- ii) LEP 2 – Business Case The Principal presented a report confirming that the full business case for capital funding of £610k submitted by the College had been approved by the LEP Board and signed contracts received. A copy of the contract was available in full on the GVO.

Planning authorisations were discussed and it was noted planning is currently a minimum 12 week turnaround costing £6900 plus VAT.

- iii) Future Opportunities – The Board were pleased to learn that applications for further funding opportunities through a LEP 3 programme (2 projects) were being submitted alongside a further opportunity through the CITB.

### **RESOLVED**

- To agree the receipt of the LEP 2 funds, which is not currently in the approved budget and make application as required for planning permission to enable the project to be fulfilled.
- To support the applications for two projects under LEP 3 and make an application to the opportunity provided by the CITB. The Principal to proceed with developing a full business case and submit proposals for all projects. Proposed by Rosie Darkin-Miller, seconded by Andy Matthews, all in favour.
- iv) Parliamentary Review invitation – the Principal reported he had submitted a draft proposal following an invitation received. This draft submission has been well received by the editor of the review and will result in a publication and 500 printed copies for use by the College. The Principal explained there would be a cost amounting to £3500 but it would be a good marketing opportunity to raise the profile of the College nationally.
- v) Trees – The College has been successful in obtaining 400 bare root saplings from the Woodland Trust. A college group of staff and students are looking at planting options.

## **Striking off Redlands from Company Register**

89/2019 The Board received an update report on progress with the closure of the Company and preparations to strike off from the Companies House Register on 10 December 2019.

## **Office for Students Correspondence**

90/2019 The Board received a copy of recent correspondence from the Office for Students and an explanatory response from the Vice Principal. Despite previous reports on issues concerning the College's registration, the letter warned of future sanctions if deadlines for submitting data were not met. This was in the context of the OfS changing deadline, conflicting instructions and the fact that the Office for Students did not meet any of its own deadlines. Following receipt of the letter, the

Board noted that there had been process and technical problems at the OfS and our submission was made and accepted as required.

**Higher Education Self-Assessment Report**

91/2019 The Board received and considered the Higher Education Self-Assessment Report. Members were informed that whilst this is a requirement, it was an internal document. The summary on page 11 identifies the audit, which is still ongoing. Members asked if there are any approvals required, as was the case last year. It was the HEFCE then so the OfS requirements are not yet known.

**Any Other Business**

92/2019 There were no other items of business.

**Date of Next Meeting**

93/2019 The next meeting was confirmed as 10 December 2019

**Confidentiality**

94/2019 There were no matters identified as confidential.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Chair

10 December 2019