

**Minutes of the Corporation Board
held on Thursday, 11 May 2017 at 5.00pm in Sketty Hall, Sketty**

Present:	Mr Colin Cornelius Dr David Ashelby Mr John Britton Mr Andrew Donald Mr Meirion Howells, Mr Mark Jones Mr Kieron Rees Ms Fiona Rees Mr Ray Singh Mr Gary Williams Mrs Susan Williams	Chair Principal
In Attendance:	Mr Mike Glover Mr Paul Harris Mrs Kay Morgan Mrs Cath Jenkins	Head of Finance Vice Principal (Corporate Services) Vice Principal (Academic Services) Employability Partnerships and Programmes Manager
Recorder:	Mrs Sharon Barron	Clerk to the Corporation

35 Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from: Mr Tim Clark, Mr Mike Day, Mrs Carol Green, Cllr Jennifer Raynor, Cllr Christine Richards, Mr Ceri Low, Mrs Chantal Patel.

36 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 March 2017 were **approved** as a correct record.

37 Matters Arising from the Minutes

NUS College Branch (Minute 30)

The Principal reported that he was awaiting a response from the NUS on progressing the establishment of an NUS branch at the College.

38 Principal's Report

The Principal presented his report.

The Board noted the sector update including a number of ongoing inquiries and consultations, and the impact on the College of the new Welsh Language Standards. In relation to these the College noted that discussions had taken place with the Welsh Commissioner's Office to identify standards which were reasonable and practicable and some which were not. Members commented on the position whereby the receptionists currently on site did not speak Welsh and noted that identifying Welsh language skills as essential would be considered in future recruitment to the post and that the opportunity to learn Welsh was offered to staff. The Principal assured members that callers wishing to continue through the medium of Welsh were

redirected to other staff. He commented that more opportunities for student learning through the medium of Welsh were being considered.

The Board noted the recent announcement that Coleg Sir Gar and Coleg Ceredigion were undertaking consultation leading to possible merger, and the allocation of additional funding for small scale maintenance.

The Principal's update in relation to developments in Swansea referred to the predicted increase of 14% in the numbers of post 16 learners from 2017/18 to 2026/27; a summary of the outcomes included in the draft 'Post 16 Update' prepared by Peter Harrison (formerly Headteacher of Gowerton Comprehensive School) for City and County of Swansea; and an update on progress with discussions with Morriston Comprehensive School, and now Bishop Vaughan School on some joint provision to 6th form pupils from both schools.

The Board noted a number of matters in relation to Work Based Learning including: that the tender exercise for the new round of work based learning contracts (WBL5) was to be delayed by at least a year; additional funding received and opportunities for further additional funding; and the College currently submitting a bid for a further increase of £3m which would result in a potential increase in the work based learning contract value from £1.7m in April 2016 (before the transfer of the City and County of Swansea contract) to over £7m in 2017-18.

The Principal referred to plans for new employability programmes which would be presented to the Board in more detail by Cath Jenkins, Employability Partnerships and Programmes Manager. (Item 39 below)

The Principal updated the Board on various items including: the outcome of correspondence with DfES in relation to the College's request to offer 3 full-time construction programmes from September 2017; the retirement of the College's Director of Skills and Business Development; that the Quality Assurance Agency had completed its re-inspection of the College and had passed all four criteria; the success of a student in the World Skills Competition; communication with staff; and forthcoming events. In relation to the appointment by the FE sector of a review body, for future HE reviews, the Principal reported that this was a decision to be made by individual institutions (Minute 19 Curriculum and Quality Committee 28 February 2017 refers).

The Principal mentioned that there was an issue with staff over resourcing in the curriculum area of hairdressing. An offer of voluntary severance had been made to staff in the area and the College was expecting sufficient number of applicants.

The Board considered the progress on estates matters including: the completion of the link road from Tycoch to Hill House and the proposed traffic management around the Tycoch and Hill House campuses to ensure safe passage around the site. Members suggested exploring use of land (referred to as the Coastal property, Minute 8.1 *et al*/ Corporation Board 27 June 2013, refers) for car-parking. They noted progress with the new build and post-fire refurbishment at Tycoch; and plans being finalised for the ground and first floor of the Kingsway building.

The Vice-Principal (Corporate Services) reported on timescales in relation to the planned extension of the refectory at the Gorseinon campus. He reported that the

planning application had been submitted with a decision anticipated in mid-June, and tender documentation prepared.

Members discussed the issue that the steel frame for the development would require a lead-in time of 8 to 10 weeks for design and fabrication which, if awaiting the outcome of the planning application, would mean the development would not start until the beginning of the autumn term, when students were back on site. Members discussed the risks of delay, and the risks to the student experience of delaying the development. against acquiring the steel frame before planning consent had been received, It was suggested that discussing the planning application with the planning officers might provide useful information on the possibility of rejection and/or delay in consent.

It was proposed, seconded and **agreed** that support be given to College managers to acquire the steel framework (at an estimated cost of around £80,000) prior to receipt of planning permission, with the decision to be delegated to College managers.

39 Employability Proposals

Mrs Cath Jenkins, Employability Partnerships and Programmes Manager presented a report on opportunities and proposals for the College to re-engage in the delivery of employability provision.

Members noted the proposed strategy and context for re-engagement in employability provision which took into account amongst other things the changes in the labour market and results models for key government contracts, the highly competitive market for delivery to certain cohorts and the need to develop partnership approaches. In addition they noted future opportunities, current need and demand. Members noted proposals for a risk-based, phased approach building capacity in 'low risk' areas using grants, targeting those nearest to the labour market in areas with little competition and using a pilot approach. Mrs Jenkins outlined how the provision would be delivered, and the source of funding, in particular EU funding, for each of the proposed four projects.

Members noted that delivery would be located in the College's new Kingsway building with a programme team of 21 new delivery staff, a further five staff providing EU funding co-ordination and administration, and 3 staff providing administrative and facilities support at the Kingsway site. In order to commence the delivery of the programme in September 2017, to meet the Welsh European Funding Office expectations on early performance and spend, the recruitment of a number of staff would commence as soon as the College received notification of funding having been approved.

Members were informed that the total indicative costs were £4.8m of which £3.8m were additional costs which would be offset by £3.7m EU funds, and that the projects could be adjusted if bids for funding were unsuccessful.

Members commented on, discussed and raised questions about: marketing the project; the uncertainties for future funding arising out of 'Brexit'; timescales for accessing EU funds; targeting groups such as black and minority ethnic (BME) women in to work; the challenges of preparing the Kingsway building for use by this project; and length of time participants would be supported to stay in work.

Members were assured that the EU funds would be available until 2020 and plans would be in place well in advance of this to secure future funding; that in relation to working with other groups there would be scope to do this in the future; that contingency arrangements such as working out of partner offices, or using other offices would be put in place if the Kingsway premises were not available in September; and that the college recognised the need to employ the right staff for these particular groups of learners, and that they be assisted in a suitable location.

The Corporation Board **noted** and **approved** the proposals set out in the report including the employability strategy, the submission of the four EU funding bids, and the phased recruitment to new roles commencing by the end of May 2017.

40 Committee Report

The Corporation Board **noted** the discussions and decisions taken at the meeting of the Audit Committee on 4 May 2017.

The Corporation Board was assured that following their reviews the internal and external auditors were now satisfied with the management responses and systems put in place following their audits, and were content with the 'direction of travel' for Track Training.

The Corporation Board **approved** the Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2015-16.

41 Any Other Business

Members discussed the issue of attendance at meetings, suggested that attendance could facilitated electronically on request and that this be made clear in the invitation to the next meeting of the Board.

42 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting would be held on 29 June 2017.

Signed.....

Date.....