



Minutes
Meeting of the Corporation
Wednesday 27 March 2019 at 4.30pm
GT2, General Teaching Building

PART 1

Present:	Pippa Goodwin (<i>Chair</i>)	Frank Pitkin
	Daniel Clawson	Janet Robertson
	Neil Dew-Gosling	Dave Snowden
	Emily Hutt	Ian Thomson
	Chris Lambert	Ryan York
	Gillian May (<i>Principal</i>)	
Apologies:	Gareth Osborn	
	Daniela Shanly	
	Andrew Try	
In attendance:	Anne Entwistle	<i>VP Curriculum & Quality</i>
	Richard Munday	<i>Director of Finance</i>
	Tracy Reeve	<i>Clerk to the Corporation</i>
	<i>For Estate Strategy Presentation only:</i>	
	Sam Armitage	<i>Head of Grounds and Facilities</i>
	Claire Conroy	<i>Health, Safety & Wellbeing Manager</i>
	Jill Small	<i>Project Consultant, Small Solutions</i>
	Sabine Meilwes	<i>Project Consultant, WaM Architects</i>
Observer:	Laura Peters	<i>Head of Inclusion</i>

The meeting was preceded by a presentation from members of the Estates Strategy Project Team, Jill Small and Sabine Meilwes.

This gave Governors an update on progress with the very comprehensive Estates Strategy work which had been undertaken in agreement with the DfE Transaction Unit, and funded with an element of the Restructuring Facility funding. The meeting was reminded that this funding was to enable BCA to explore the potential options for future developments on the campus, including the opportunities to generate receipts from release of land for alternative uses. The meeting was reminded that this planning would be limited to a scale which was just large enough to secure funding for the support of the heritage assets on the campus i.e. 'enabling development' only.

This verbal report provided clarity on the work being undertaken on the evaluation of the existing estate, how it dovetailed with future curriculum planning and property implications. The opportunities and constraints around planning, the responsibility for the numerous heritage assets on site, surplus land and the availability of funding were all considered. Governors were given a clear update on the review and evaluation of the options around any future planning proposals to generate capital and ongoing income in support of the heritage assets. SM informed the meeting that a pre-application meeting with representatives from the RBWM Planning Department

had gone well and the aim would be to submit a planning application – as shown to the meeting – in June 2019. The outline detail of the two potential planning options was considered by the meeting including site plans, potential style elevations and likely scale. The meeting was also given a progress update on the capital works currently underway on campus including the repair of the Jacob Bancks room and the Residential Block heating upgrade. Contract values, budget figures and completion dates for both of these projects were noted by the meeting.

Governors commended the very comprehensive Estates Strategy work and the value to the College moving forward in being able to make an informed decision on the best use of its physical assets.

The Estates Strategy Project update report was NOTED.

Governors asked that the Estates Project Team should undertake a SWOT analysis to highlight any areas of concern/ weakness in the favoured planning proposal.

1/19 Chair's welcome

The Chair (PG) welcomed the two new Governors to the meeting, Daniel Clawson and Chris Lambert and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

2/19 Apologies

Apologies had been received from Daniela Shanly, Gareth Osborn and Andrew Try.

3/19 Notification of any other business

The Chair had one item of business in relation to the Clerk to the Corporation.

The Director of Finance had one item in relation to the College's ESFA Financial Health grade 2017/18.

There was no other business notified.

4/19 Notification of Members interests

There were no interests notified.

5/19 Minutes of the meeting held on 12 December 2018

The minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

6/19 Matters Arising

The Clerk confirmed that there were no matters arising that were not already covered on the agenda.

7/19 Student Governors' Report

The Student Governors gave the meeting a comprehensive verbal update on their recent activity across College including the following.

- ***Catering***

The Student Team had continued to meet with catering providers Baxter Storey and the Bursary Team to improve catering with regard to Free College Meal (FCM) learners. Baxter Storey had now agreed to bridge the funding gap between the Free College Meal allowance (actually set at £2.39 although BCA had increased this to £3.50) and the cost of a hot meal in the canteen at £3.89. Governors sought, and were given, confirmation that Baxter Storey had agreed that this would also apply during the next academic year. The new system for

FCM learners to be automatically identified on the till system had been well received.

- **Transport**

The meeting noted that an email address for learners and parents to route questions and any complaints on transport through had now been established.

- **Enrichment**

The Student Council had now established a sign language club on Monday lunchtimes which had been well attended with a range of learners and one of the Reception Staff in attendance. The Principal asked whether there were plans to extend this beyond a Monday as not all learners were in College on that day; RY confirmed that they would look at this as the offer developed. There were also plans to promote an activity around 'Deaf Culture' for staff and students.

The Governors thanked the student governors for their input to Corporation and their positive activity within the student body at BCA especially around the activities to promote inclusion. The Student Governors both agreed that they found the whole experience of being a Student Governor very positive and they welcomed the opportunity to contribute.

The Report was NOTED

8/19 Link Governor Feedback

Governors fed back experience from their recent Link Governor activities:

Dave Snowden (DS) informed the meeting that for the third year running in January 2019 he had set the Graphics students a commercial brief to design a new bottle label for a mulberry cider. He had been back into College during week commencing 18th March to judge the entries. DS informed the meeting that there had been the highest number of entries ever and the quality of entries had been excellent. Staff at BCA had commended the value added to these students in terms of developing employability skills.

Frank Pitkin (FP) gave the meeting an update on his Link Governor visit to Sport and Public Services. He informed the meeting that he had been pleased with progress made since the integration of the two departments under one HoD. As Link Governor he had spoken to lecturers from both departments together and the feedback had been positive. He had spoken to the HoD of Sport and PS to ascertain what she had 'learnt' from her department being the focus of a 'deep-dive' from Ofsted during their recent pilot inspection of BCA under the new Education Inspection Framework. FP had been reassured that her response was that this high level of scrutiny by Ofsted had validated the department's own self-assessment that they were providing good quality education for their learners. FP had also undertaken a Link Governor visit to Motor Vehicles since the last Corporation meeting. He was assured that the new Head of Department was working well in the role and there was an increased sense of stability and confidence throughout the MV department.

Other Governors informed the meeting that they had undertaken their Link visits but did not have anything specific to feedback to the meeting.

NOTED

ITEMS FOR DECISION/ APPROVAL

9/19 Residential Overseas Learning Visits

The meeting considered two separate proposals for overseas learning visits: Business students visiting Disneyland Paris in March 2019; and a German Exchange trip which would take place in October 2019. The Clerk (TR) informed the meeting that the Disneyland Trip for Level 3 Business Students had been approved under Chair's Action due to the tight timescale; all requisite paperwork had been provided in advance of the trip. TR assured the meeting that Business Staff had been informed that for future trips they would need to submit details in plenty of time for Corporation approval. Governors ratified the Chair's approval for this visit.

The meeting considered the proposed exchange trip to Bavaria for Level 3 Early Years and Health and Social Care learners, leaving on 7th October 2019. The Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality confirmed that all the requisite risk assessments were in place and that staffing levels accompanying the trips would meet all safeguarding guidelines.

The meeting was reminded that two students from each of the South Africa and Vienna trips would be invited to the May 2019 Corporation meeting to give governors feedback on the trips and the impact on their learning and lives.

The meeting RATIFIED the APPROVAL given under Chair's action for the Level 3 Business learning visit to Disneyland Paris, 25-27th March 2019.

The meeting APPROVED the proposal for the Level 3 Heath & Social Care/ Early Years, exchange visit to Bavaria in October 2019 as presented.

10/19 Action Points from Governors' Strategy Day

The meeting noted a paper which summarised the action points from the Governors Strategy Day held on 6th February 2019. The meeting commended the underlying ongoing strategic decision for the College to focus on its unique selling points in developing centres of excellence over the next 3 years. The updated dashboard in relation to the 5 key strategic priorities and specific SMART targets within each of these was considered and approved by the meeting; this had been revised by the Executive Team to reflect discussions at the February 2019 Strategy Day.

The Action Points and BCA Strategy Map 2019-22 were APPROVED.

An update on the digital learning strategy to be brought to the Corporation later in the year (July 2019) after the new AP Digital Learning had taken up post

[The Student Governors (EH and RY) left the meeting due to a prior commitment.]

11/19 Proposed curriculum changes 2019/20

The Principal (GM) gave a verbal report.

Floristry. She reminded the meeting that although it was not set in stone, the threshold financial contribution level for courses to be considered viable was 55% at BCA. GM informed the meeting that after careful consideration by the SLT the decision had been taken to stop the full-time Floristry provision at BCA as the current contribution level was at 8%; it had been very low for a number of years. However, the Floristry provision for Foundation learners, schools 14-16, and apprenticeships would remain. This curriculum change would free up teaching space for other growing curriculum areas. Governors sought, and were given, confirmation that staff

had been informed and that there would be no redundancies as a result of this change.

Motor Vehicles: The meeting was reminded that BCA's Motor vehicle (MV) apprenticeship provision was currently delivered under a Level 2 or 3 Framework. The option to deliver a Level 2 WBL qualification would disappear when the area moved to Apprenticeship Standards in 2021 and it was unlikely that many BCA learners would be able to access a Level 3 WBL qualification under the new standards; it would be above their baseline capabilities. In addition it was likely that the Standards would not meet the needs of Small and Medium Employers (SMEs) which made up the bulk of BCA's employer cohort for Motor Vehicle apprenticeships. The SLT were advocating that the College should run down the MV apprenticeship provision with immediate effect (no new starters after March 2019). It was proposed that the resource from this area should be used to build towards a successful T Level provision at Level 2 in Motor Vehicles. This would include work with employers, as well as work around information and guidance (IAG) with learners and parents. Governors, including the Link Governor for Motor Vehicle (FP) supported this proposal, he had been pre-briefed and understood the reasons for the decision.

The meeting NOTED and SUPPORTED the proposed curriculum changes in Floristry and Motor Vehicle.

12/19 Mid-Year Reforecast 2018/19

The meeting noted a comprehensive Budget re-forecast from the Director of Finance (RM). He informed the meeting that as in previous years the reforecast had been prepared using the fully-encompassing excel model that was built in 2015. Governors were reminded that as previously advised the operating surplus was now re-forecast to be as originally budgeted at £175,000; this was after the £700,000 Restructuring Funds for the Estates Strategy Work were correctly accounted for. The plan year reforecast for 2019/20 was also in line with the plan at £184,000. The major variances were noted as follows:

2018/19

- Increased High Needs income of £1.516m against a budget of £990,000 due to additional High Needs learners. The meeting commended the growth in High Needs income which was predicated on the College's strong performance in this area and a very good reputation.
- Increased part-time course fees income of £293,000 against a budget of £96,000 due to the acquisition of Landbased Training private provider.
- Higher HE income of £456,000 against a budget of £385,000 due to more students than forecast.
- Total income was now forecast at £14.433m against a budget of £13.623m.
- Staff costs were now forecast to be £9.004m against a budget of £8.526m with much of the higher pay cost linked to the increased High Needs income.
- Contractor costs were forecast at £150,000 against the budget of £33,000 but this was offset by the increase Landbased Training income.
- Total costs were forecast to have an adverse variance of £1.510m against the budget of £12.748m. Much of this was due to the one-off variance of £700,000 for Estates related costs.
- The balance sheet was also considered, cash was showing a positive variance of £29,000 against the budget of £600,000. Current ratio was now forecast at 0.89 against the budget of 0.92.

- The meeting was reminded that as previously advised the financial health grade would be 'satisfactory' for 2018/19 rather than 'good' as shown in the original budget.

2019/20

- Increased ESFA income with the forecast now at £9.448m against a plan of £8.950m; this was the lagged funding to reflect growth in learner numbers achieved in 2018/19.
- High needs income was forecast to be £203,000 above the plan of £1.030m.
- Part-time course income was also showing a positive variance due to the Landbased Training commercial course portfolio. Income was now forecast at £293,000 against the plan of £96,000.
- Notable variance on costs was in electricity costs which was showing a negative variance of £68,000 against the planned £163,000 due to higher wholesale prices.
- Increased pay costs of £9.142m against the budget of £8.659m part of which was related to the High Needs provision.
- The financial health grade for 2019/20 was noted as satisfactory in the re-forecast compared with good in the plan but the FD assured the meeting that a minimal increase to the current ratio would enable the College to secure a 'good' financial health rating.

Governors sought, and were given assurance that tests relating to the bank covenants had been completed prior to the Corporation meeting and that BCA would pass all bank covenants in both years with some headroom. RM confirmed that the reforecast would be shared with both the ESFA, the bank and the Transaction Unit. The meeting was reminded that the ESFA health grading had no impact with the College bankers Lloyds but they would be fully aware of it. The meeting was informed that Audit Committee had suggested that the College's external auditors, RSM, should be commissioned to undertake a mid-year review of the management accounts (February 2019) in order to provide additional external assurance for Governors. The FD had suggested this course of action as he was aware that over-reliance on key personnel was an ongoing risk in any organisation.

The Budget Reforecast 2018/19 and Financial Plan 2019/20 was APPROVED.

The proposal for external auditors RSM to undertake a mid-year review of the College's management accounts was APPROVED.

13/19 Fees and Charges 2019/20

The Finance Director presented a paper outlining proposed course fees and charges for 2018/19 for the following areas of provision: Higher Education (HE) Tuition Fees; Student Transport; Accommodation; Financial Support thresholds; Facilities Charge; FE Adult Learner Responsive (ALR) tuition fees (where co-funded); Awarding Body Fees; Full fee paying students; and arrangement fees for instalment plans.

The following changes were noted:

- HE tuition fees: it was noted that no increases were currently foreseen. Fees for the Equine and Animal Foundation degrees with the Royal Agricultural University (RAU) would remain at £6,000 respectively. Fees for the Veterinary Physiotherapy degree (accredited by the RAU) and the new FdSc Ecology and Conservation (RAU) would also remain at £6,000. Fees for the degree in Child Development (Reading University) would be confirmed in June 2019; these were currently at £4,625 but might increase. The meeting was reminded that HE fees

were set in consultation with HE partners to ensure a common approach across the partnership; BCA would produce an HE Tuition Fees leaflet detailing fees and available bursaries and identifying sources of financial assistance.

- Student Transport: the two-tier banding system based on distance travelled would continue. The proposed price increases for termly rates would rise by 1.8% (Band A) and 1.6% (Band B) for terms 1 and 2, and 2.7% or 2.4% for term 3. The cost of an annual bus ticket would rise by 1.6% to £650 for Band A (currently £640) and 2.0% to £780 for Band B (£765 in current year). Governors were reminded that this area was now no longer subsidised and the increases were based on the likely level of fuel price increases that would be passed on by the coach companies. The meeting was reminded that students who qualified for financial support would only be asked to make a one-off payment of £70 (band A) or £85 (band B) before they were issued with a bus pass (this represented a £5 increase compared with the current charge).
- Student Accommodation: after careful consideration by the Executive Team and then the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) it was recommended that the fees for Residential Student Accommodation Charges for 3-nights a week should be £2,700 (this was the same charges as applied in the current year on a pro-rata basis). The meeting was reminded that there would be limited numbers of learners in residential accommodation for 2019/20 (only a few second year learners) as the College had made the decision to withdraw from this offer. Governors were given reassurance around the additional help available to learners through the Discretionary Learner Support Fund and noted that the household minimum income threshold would be increased by £1,000 to £25,000. Students who qualified for financial support would be asked to pay 25% of the accommodation fee themselves; this was the same rate as used during 2018/19.
- Facilities Charge: Executive Team recommended that the annual Facilities Charge (payable by all learners) should remain at £95. Governors were given additional clarification on what was included in this charge: printing/ copying credit of £30; free car parking; an overall College subsidy on the canteen provision; and free use of the on-site gym. The meeting was also reminded that this money was always spent on facilities and services for the learners, e.g. a recent complete refit of Cheekis Café.
- FE (ALR) Tuition Fees (co-funded): the annual fee would remain at £2,200 for 2019/20. This would ensure that the College remained in line with the other Colleges in the Thames Valley. Governors were reminded that the number of co-funded learners was very low at BCA.
- Awarding Body Fee: if a learner was required to remit awarding body fees the fees would increase by an amount within the range of 2.8% to 3.8% for Level 1 to Level 4 diplomas and subsidiary diplomas.
- Full fee paying students: this would be available in the Course Cost List which would be finalised in May/ June 2019.
- Arrangement Fee for instalment plans: this fee – applicable to accommodation charges and course fees only – would remain at £100. Governors were reminded that the College was not able to charge interest on outstanding balances as it was not registered with the Financial Conduct Authority.

The meeting was given assurance that the Fees and Charges Policy was issued to all applicants and also made very clear at enrolment; the reasons for any price increases were also made clear to returning students.

The proposal for BCA Fees and Charges 2019/20 was APPROVED as presented.

14/19 Risk Register/ Board Assurance Framework

The meeting considered the Board Assurance Framework which clearly detailed the key strategic risks against the five agreed strategic priorities for BCA. This item was now a standing item for consideration at each Audit Committee and Corporation meeting. Governors noted that this document had been reviewed in detail at the last Audit Committee meeting on 6th March 2019. Changes made since last presented to the Corporation in December 2018 had been highlighted. The meeting was reminded that any change to the Risk Register was made after consideration at the Executive Team (the 4 SPHs), SLT, Audit Committee and then Corporation. The meeting discussed the following changes as well as the key risks which were currently rated as 'red' and the ongoing mitigation that was being provided against their crystallisation:

Risk 1 'Failure to retain independent status'. (No change to risk score of 10 'green' after mitigation): The FD assured the meeting that the College was on track for the forecast surplus to be achieved during 2018/19 and for 2019/20 onwards the current model was showing BCA's financial health grade as 'good'. The meeting agreed that the ongoing scrutiny from the Transaction Unit along with regular reviews with College bankers Lloyds gave the Corporation very rigorous additional external assurance around College finances.

Risk 2 'LGPS and TPS deficit could be significant. Increase of TPS contributions from September 2019 (Risk score raised to 15 'amber'): The DfE had only confirmed funding to cover the first year of the substantial TPS employer contribution.

Risk 3 'Going Concern issues. Failure to meet income targets' (Risk score at 10 'green' after mitigation): The narrative had been amended to include the newly enhanced control measure of modelling using the new curriculum planning model. This would enable the College to maximise income streams.

Risk 4 'Quality and Funding issues associated with apprenticeship provision are not addressed' (Risk score at 10 'green' after mitigation): The narrative had been amended to include the Timely Success data at 74% compared with the national average of 59%.

Risk 5 'Poor Quality teaching is not addressed' (Risk score at 10 'green' after mitigation): The narrative had been amended to include the March 2019 retention data at 96% (the end year figure 2017/18 had been 92.3%).

Risk 6 'Secure full registration with the office for Students (OfS) as a matter of priority' (Risk score at 20 'red' after mitigation): The Principal highlighted this as the major current threat to BCA's strategic priorities. Governors were updated on the appeal which had been lodged to the OfS in response to their notification of their intent to refuse BCA's registration as Higher Education (HE) providers. The meeting was reminded that the impact of this would mean that BCA learners were not able to apply for student loan funding so it would have a detrimental impact on HE recruitment. The Principal assured the meeting that the appeal lodged was extremely robust but there was no guarantee of success; OfS registration was proving problematic for a number of Colleges throughout the FE sector. Governors were informed that in order to have a plan if the appeal was not successful the College was also in discussions with the Royal Agricultural University to look at other delivery/ accreditation/ franchising options for the provision of the Vet Physio Course delivered at BCA. The meeting was reminded that the Childcare and Development HE provision at BCA was delivered on a sub-contracting basis for Reading University; this would not be affected by non-registration with the OfS. Governors were assured that the College was talking to the OfS to look at a potential exit

strategy if the very robust appeal against non-registration was not accepted. The Principal confirmed that the College was currently awaiting a date for a meeting with the OfS legal team to discuss the College's appeal and additional representations.

Risk 8 'Insufficient capital investment in the listed assets, specifically the mansion house' (Risk score of 20 'red' after mitigation): The issue of securing the requisite funding for the future maintenance of the heritage assets was still very uncertain. The meeting was reminded that Restructuring Funds could not be used to support the heritage assets at BCA.

Risk 10 'Insufficiently developed succession planning/ staff retention strategies (Risk score of 20 'red' after mitigation): The Principal highlighted the addition of a specific issue with recruiting specialist staff for the College's High Needs provision to the narrative. This had been raised at the Governors Strategy day in February 2019.

Risk 15 'Safeguarding and H&S legislative and statutory requirements are not met (Risk score of 15 'amber' after mitigation): Governors noted that the Leaders in Safeguarding audit and 'badge' as well as the positive result from the March 2019 Ofsted Education Inspection Framework pilot had been added to the external assurance column.

The Board Assurance Framework/ Risk Register was RECEIVED.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

15/19 Academic Report

- **Headline progress against KPIs:** The meeting noted the whole College retention rate of 96.4% year-to-date (compared to a figure of 96% at the same time in the prior year). The attendance figure for study programmes (including maths and English) was noted as 92.2% against a College target of 92%; members were reminded that this did not include authorised absence. The lower attendance at maths and English provision was noted; 87.3% and 86% respectively. The meeting was reminded that target grades for 2017/18 had been raised to meet the 25th percentile; the expectation was that 50% of all students exceeded their target grades and a minimum of 75% achieved their target grades. Governors noted that the current progress data indicated that 68% of learners were set to achieve or exceed their target grade; Governors were given assurance that this was currently a focus for action and improvement within the College. The findings from the 74 formal lesson observations year-to-date were noted. The comprehensive feedback which RAG rated each element within the lesson observation was noted and Governors agreed that this gave a very clear indication of cross-College CPD needs. The meeting noted that 'paired' i.e. externally validated Learning Walks had taken place during the ongoing Landex Peer Review 25-26th March 2019.

- **In year performance QIP summary 2018/19**

The meeting considered the report which was presented by the Vice Principal Curriculum and Students (AE). The meeting noted the summary of progress at March 2019 against the 2018/19 QIP which had been based on the Self-Assessment 2017/18. This document was now presented as a one-page dashboard of progress against the four key priorities: quality of teaching, learning and assessment in GCSE maths; apprenticeship provision; stretch and challenge; and processes to comply with SEND Code of Practice. The meeting commended the progress made against each of these during 2018/19 year-to-date and noted the action planned for the remainder of the academic year. The changes to the QIP since last presented were

highlighted. AE highlighted the addition of a fifth priority which had been added to the QIP after the recent Ofsted Pilot Inspection; 'To ensure all teaching staff without a formal teaching qualification were supported to achieve at level 5 over an appropriate and agreed timescale'. This reflected the focus on pedagogy and the teaching methods and tools used for the 'Implementation' of the curriculum within the new Education Inspection Framework (EIF).

- **Feedback from Ofsted EIF Pilot Inspection 12-13th March 2019**

The meeting noted the feedback from the recent pilot Ofsted inspection under the new Education Inspection Framework (EIF); this had taken place over two days in March 2019. Although no formal report was generated from this pilot inspection the feedback from inspectors had judged BCA to be 'Good'. The Vice-Principal asserted the value of taking part in this pilot work; it had enabled the College to validate its SAR judgements made in December 2018 that the College was still 'Good' but had made progress since the last formal inspection (March 2017). The Principal highlighted the new focus within the EIF which centred on the '3 Is' Curriculum intent, implementation and impact. Curriculum intent looked for: broad development of professional, technical and personal skills; confidence to take risk and build resilience; and enjoyment and strong sense of achievement. Inspectors had undertaken a 'deep-dive' into Sport and PS, Apprenticeships, Maths and Animal Management (due to this size of this curriculum area). Governors were given detailed feedback on the findings on each of the curriculum areas.

The meeting noted the strengths identified during the inspection:

- Strong subject specialist knowledge
- Teachers had relevant vocational qualifications and experience.
- Very inclusive culture
- High achievement rates
- Lots of support for learners in class
- Teachers employed techniques and activities to keep students well engaged and challenged
- Retention and attendance was high
- Assessment was generally thorough and well annotated
- Clear, helpful, plentiful Information and Guidance (IAG)
- Good range of visits, speakers, events and volunteering opportunities

They also discussed the areas flagged for improvement; most of which had already been flagged within the College Self-Assessment Report 2017/18.

- In some classes there was evidence of low expectations for students
- In some cases students and apprentices did not understand the relevance of their lessons (learners needed to understand 'intent' as well as staff).
- In some classes the impact of learning support was variable
- There is still some inconsistency in the rate of progress for some learners
- It was not always evident from planning that lessons had been clearly sequenced
- There is some poor pedagogical practice in a minority of lessons
- There is still some evidence of teaching to assignment only
- Some starter activities were too laboured and long (L3 Y2)

Governors sought specific feedback on the findings in relation to English and maths provision at the College. AE informed the meeting that the inspectors had identified good progress since the last inspection in March 2017. They particularly liked the tracking of individual skills development for maths learners which provided a focus on progress. The meeting was also pleased to note that Ofsted had commented that

the Colleges maths attendance rate (87.3%) was the highest that they had seen anywhere. Lesson observations had seen some excellent teaching in maths and some pedestrian teaching which required improvement. English was now much improved and could be reliably graded as 'good'. An action from the pilot inspection was that English and maths teaching staff should attend curriculum meetings so that they could contextualise their work more effectively. This would also enable vocational staff to understand exactly what was being taught to English and maths learners.

The Chair (PG) highlighted the issue of 'stretch and challenge' which had been raised at the previous Ofsted Inspection in March 2017; she challenged the Exec on whether the College was making sufficient progress in this area. The VP Curriculum and Quality (AE) confirmed that progress had been made as follows: the College had undertaken a lot of CPD to help staff with this; training on questioning techniques had been provided; best practice was being shared across College; and overall, progress was being made as the College was now matching ALPS for progress on target grade data. However, AE agreed that there was more work to be done in developing extension activities for staff to use in the classroom. **Governors suggested that any staff identified as being particularly strong in the area of 'stretch and challenge' should be used cross-college as exemplars to share best practice.**

Governors sought clarity on the likely timetable for any future Ofsted Inspection, this was likely to be on a two-yearly cycle.

- **Apprenticeships**

Success Rates: The meeting noted the final apprenticeship success rates for 2017/18 compared with the two prior years; this clearly demonstrated the distance travelled and improvement secured in this important area of provision. The data for the 'best case' outcomes by curriculum area 2018/19 were also noted. Governors noted that predicted overall achievement for 2018/19 was currently 79.81% (compared with 77% in 2017/18) and a national rate of 70.8%.

Apprenticeship enrolments and Targets:

The report provided detailed financial data on performance against funding allocations; this detailed levy and non-levy income by age of apprentices. Income Year to date was noted as £299,712 against a forecast of £263,914; positive variance of £35,798. The enrolment numbers were noted; the total figure was now 174: of which 30 were at level 3 and 144 at level 2 (the prior year figure had been 167). The meeting noted details of the current business development pipeline for 2018/19 by the seven curriculum areas: arborist, agriculture, floristry, landscape and horticultural operative, golf greenkeeper, sports turf operative and motor vehicle.

The meeting was pleased to note that the Business Development team were now able to offer a roll-on-roll off programme which brought BCA in line with competitors; this new offer would be promoted through marketing material and social media. The meeting considered the possible impact of the current Brexit situation; it appeared that some employers were hesitating to recruit and were certainly more cautious with supporting apprenticeships. The meeting also noted that BCA was experiencing growing competition from Merrist Wood, Capel Manor and Sparsholt College, who had both become GTC approved. In response BCA had launched a large telemarketing campaign for Arboriculture and Horticulture and a similar exercise for Greenkeeping employers was planned for April 2019. The College had received a large number of enquiries recently across all subject areas, particularly in

landscaping and horticulture operative apprenticeships. The meeting noted that the College's growth areas for the next year would again be Agriculture, Arborist, Greenkeeping and Sports Turf. Governors noted that capacity within the area of Sports Turf would be dependent on the assessing capacity available but this was a growth area with not many colleges offering a strong programme. Governors were reminded that Agriculture had shown small numbers this year as the College had waited for the new Standards to be released. Now that the increased funding band has been confirmed the Business Development Team would promote this area more fully.

Functional Skills (FS) reforms. The meeting noted that the last date of registration for the existing FS would be 31st August 2019, after this point Apprentices would need to be registered onto the new reformed qualifications which had increase Guided Learning Hours from 45 to 55 with no associated increase in funding. FS English would still be in 3 parts with Reading, Writing and Speaking and Listening, no spell check or dictionary will be able to be used in Writing, the emphasis being on applying skills effectively. FS Maths would be assessed in 1 exam in 2 parts (25% no calculator) taken together with 1 overall pass rate. FS ICT (Motor Vehicle apprentices only) remains unaffected but a reform has been launched.

Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers (RoATP): The meeting was reminded that all apprentices providers were required to reapply to the RoATP this year (for 2019/20 delivery), BCA had been given notification of the window to apply closing by the 30th April 2019. It was expected that providers would receive a response 12 weeks after the close of the application window.

- **Higher Education (HE) Report**

Office for Students (OfS) Registration: The meeting was reminded that the College had refused a 'notice of intention to refuse registration' from the Office for Students. However, as previously discussed with Governors the College had submitted a strong appeal. This appeal was being supported by the AoC who were working with a number of FE Colleges who had not secured registration with the OfS.

Programme Development: The meeting was pleased to note that validation development was now in progress for two new programmes with the Royal Agricultural University (RAU):

- BSc (Hons) Top Up Animal Behaviour and Welfare (from September 2019)
- FdSc Ecology and Conservation (from September 2019)

Governors were reminded that these new courses were currently being promoted 'subject to validation' on UCAS for 2019 entry and the BCA HE web pages were in the process of being amended to include the new programmes.

September 2019 Applications: The meeting was informed that applications had started to come in via UCAS for 2019, putting the College ahead of the same time in the prior year. Total applications were increased by 60% compared to the prior year. The Vet Physiotherapy Taster Day in February had been fully booked and another one would be held in April 2019 if demand required. In total the College had received 138 applications for September 2019 enrolment against a target intake of 74 new learners (plus 50 continuing learners). The breakdown by course and the numbers of progressing Year 2 learners was also noted.

The Academic Report including Higher Education and Apprenticeships was NOTED and APPROVED.

16/19 Gender Pay Gap Report

The meeting noted the College's 2018 Gender Pay Gap Report which had been published on 13 March 2019 and was available on the BCA website. Governors were reminded that Gender pay gap reporting required employers with 250 or more employees to publish statutory calculations each year showing the pay gap between male and female employees. The data presented for BCA had been prepared in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017. The figures were based on employee data as at 31st March 2018; at this date BCA employed 329 staff, 108 (32.83%) of which were male and 221 (67.17%) were female. The mean gender pay gap in hourly pay was noted as: male £12.16 and female £12.13 (men's hourly rate was 0.25% higher). The median gender pay gap in hour pay was also noted: male £12.00 and female £11.60 (women's hourly rate was 3.33% lower). Governors sought, and were given, confirmation that no action was required in response to these findings.

BCA's Gender Pay Gap Report 2018 was NOTED

17/19 Staff Feedback Report

The meeting noted an Executive Summary and Insights Report on the recent Staff Survey results which had been prepared for the SLT. The meeting commended this very detailed report which presented responses but also analysed the findings and suggested actions that could be put in place to respond to staff views.

The meeting noted that the 2018/19 staff survey comprised of 11 questions which all staff were encouraged to participate in; 120 responses were received, which equated to 35.19% of staff). **Staff Governor (CL) asserted his belief that this was a poor response rate and it was agreed that the SLT should consider how to encourage more staff to take part in future years.** On the whole results were positive, with 92.50% of respondents either agreeing or strongly agreeing that they were proud to be a member of staff at the College, 90.83% of respondents either agreeing or strongly agreeing that learners were supported to develop positive attitudes to learning and work, and 90.00% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that safeguarding arrangements were effective at the College. Governors were given assurance by the Exec Team that the findings of the report and suggested actions had been discussed at SLT and were being implemented. This proposed action plan would be communicated back to staff to demonstrate that their suggestions and views were being acted upon. The Principal had already attended staff meetings in each of the curriculum areas to discuss the outcomes of the Staff Survey. The lack of comparators was raised as an issue by the meeting; this would provide valuable context for Governors to understand the results.

The Staff Survey Insights report 2018/19 was commended for its level of detail and NOTED

The meeting AGREED that comparators needed to be provided for other FE Colleges in future Staff Survey reports.

18/19 Estate Review Update Report

The meeting considered the information provided which included the current status, challenges and achievements and opportunities around the following: Buildings and facilities projects update; maintenance and compliance; utilities; grounds and farmed estate; and sustainability. The meeting commended this useful report which continued to give Corporation Members a clear view of the current issues around the

wider BCA estate and clearly highlighted achievements and challenges. The meeting noted the large number of projects currently underway on the campus other than the Jacob Bancks Room repair. These included:

- Residential pipework and plant room - Works due to be completed end of June. First trench works complete. Construction of plant room and buried LPG tanks taking place next 3 weeks.
- Jersey Yard biomass boiler installation - Works due to be complete 22nd March. Boiler was now commissioned and operating. Final pipe lagging and pellet silo construction due to complete imminently.
- CCTV renewal - Works due to be completed through Mar/Apr. Network installations currently being performed by Hardcastle, with School Watch (CCTV supplier) due to commence works 19th March.
- Electricity sub metering - Installation works completed, initial data collection and dashboard calibration currently under way.

The really positive work being undertaken on the College's sustainability agenda was commended; the bi-monthly Sustainability Newsletter was very comprehensive and gave staff and external stakeholders a clear view of progress in this area.

The meeting noted the considerable work being undertaken within the Field and Fodder section of the report; the Grounds Team were very adept at managing this specialist agricultural side to BCA as well as the ongoing general campus development work.

The Estates Report was NOTED.

19/19 Finance Report

• **Finance Director's Report**

The meeting considered the Finance Director's Report. This provided additional narrative around the following: 2018/19 performance to date; DfE Grant and related matters; cash flow; internal audit activity; and TPS contributions.

• **College Management Accounts: February 2019**

The FD presented the Management Accounts to 28 February 2019. The meeting was given confirmation that the operating deficit of £163,000 was in line with the re-forecast and the College expected to deliver the budgeted surplus of £175,000 for the full year. For the 12 months to the end of February 2019 the College was graded 'good' (which was ahead of the budget and reforecast of 'satisfactory'), and passed all the bank covenant tests. The management accounts were taken as read after the meeting had discussed the Mid-Year Reforecast earlier in the meeting. Income was £15,000 below the reforecast at £8.09m but there were no significant variances within this. Governors noted that pay costs were £12,000 below the reforecast at £5.2m. This level of pay expenditure represented 65.8% of income, which was slightly above full year forecast (64.1%) and reflected back-loading of income. Non-Pay costs were noted as £3.05m year-to-date which was £2,000 below the reforecast. The meeting noted the dashboard of financial key performance indicators and the Human Resources data dashboard which accompanied the management accounts on a monthly basis and a detailed cash-flow forecast which did not highlight any issues with cash-flow. The average cash-balance during February 2019 was £0.86m in credit; the meeting was reminded that the College would now reinstate its Treasury Policy in order to get the best possible return from surplus cash.

The February 2019 management accounts were RECEIVED.**20/19 Learner Numbers and Funding Forecast: Applications 2019/20**

The meeting noted a detailed spreadsheet showing applications by curriculum area at 19th March 2019 compared with the same point in the prior year. Current applications were currently at 1,112 compared with 1,059 at the same point during the prior year (+ 53 applications). The meeting considered the curriculum areas which were behind compared with the prior year: Equine (73%), Land (75%), Health Studies (81%), Agriculture (81%), Motor Vehicle (83%), Foundation (86%) and Art & Design (89%). The Principal confirmed that this was being watched very carefully by SLT on a weekly basis. Governor were also reminded that the College had its final Open Event for 2019 enrolment on 1st May from 5-8pm; current online registrations for this event were strong and showed a larger cohort of Year 11 learners than in previous years.

The Applications Report was NOTED**21/19 Health, Safety, Security and Wellbeing Report**

Management: The meeting noted that throughout the year the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager had continued to visit departments and support staff with all aspects of health and safety requirements to embed a positive attitude to health and safety. The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager also gave regular updates at the weekly Leadership Team (Friday) and Staff Briefing (Tuesday) meetings.

Committee

The Health, Safety, Security and Wellbeing Committee continued to meet termly and the Health and Safety Champions were keeping in regular touch by forum. There were eight Health and Safety Champions and the forum was hosted by a member of the Technician Team.

Policy and Procedure:

All staff had been issued with a new Health and Safety Policy and Arrangements document in February 2019 and asked to electronically sign to acknowledge receipt.

Incident Reporting:

The total number of accidents for the half year September 2018 to February 2019 was noted as 43. This would give a predicted year total of 86, (compared with the prior year figure of 83). Governors noted that there had been two RIDDOR reportable accidents to date, both within the category of 'over 7 days off work'. The details were noted as follows:

- 14/12/18: A member of staff tripped over a log which was being used as a security block at the entrance to a car park. The injured person had bruised ribs.
- 21/01/19 A member of staff was accidentally hit by a student in a wheelchair. The injured person had bruising to the left arm and hip.

Training:

Health and Safety training year-to-date had included:

- City & Guilds Level 2 Health & Safety Award in October and February, 14 Staff.
- First Aid at Work in October and February, 15 Staff
- Manual Handling Refresher for 7 Domestic Services staff.

Future training was planned in March 2019 when 21 staff from Estates and Domestic Services would complete Working at Height Awareness Training. Eight of those will also complete harness training for an IPAF (International Powered Access Federation) qualification; to enable them to operate powered access equipment.

The Health and Safety Update Report was NOTED

22/19 Principal's Report

The report was taken as read as it had been circulated by e-mail earlier in the month.

23/19 Report from Committees

- **Audit Committee - 6 March 2019**

The Clerk informed the meeting that the minutes would be circulated once they had been finalised and approved by the chair of the Audit Committee.

NDG confirmed that the key business of the meeting had been covered during the Corporation meeting agenda.

NOTED

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

24/19 Any Other Business

- **Change of Title of Clerk to the Corporation**

The Chair (PG) presented a proposal to change the job title of the Clerk to the Corporation to Director of Governance. The rationale was that within the FE sector a number of colleges had changed the job title from Clerk to the Corporation to something else e.g. Director of Governance/ Governance Director to better reflect what the role involved. Reasons for this change in other colleges had been presented to the Remuneration Committee including: Better reflects the status of the role; Made a difference on how the role was viewed both internally and externally; Strengthened the way that Clerks were perceived; Helped Clerks to be taken seriously, particularly by third parties who may not be in the sector. The Chair also reminded the meeting that the FE Commissioner had recently highlighted the importance of the Clerk's role in relation to being a 'gatekeeper' to avoid poor governance - often the reason cited for College failures. PG confirmed that there would be no associated changes to the terms, conditions, job description or pay for the role. PG confirmed that this proposal was being recommended by the Remuneration Committee.

The meeting approved a revised Job Description for the Director of Governance; the only change to this was for it to include the explicit duty for the Director of Governance to fulfil the role of Clerk to the Corporation (to comply with the College Instrument and Articles).

The meeting APPROVED the change of the job title of the Clerk to the Corporation BCA to Director of Governance BCA.

- **ESFA Health Grading**

The meeting noted a letter from the ESFA and the accompanying dashboard of financial KPIs which confirmed their assessment of BCA's financial health after their review of the College's audited financial statements, finance record and assurance returns for 2017/18. Governors were reminded that BCA's financial health had been assessed as 'satisfactory' for 2017/18, 'good' for 2018/19 and 'good' for 2019/20 (the last two were based on the financial plan). The Finance Director reminded the meeting that the financial health grade for 2017/18 had been assessed as 'satisfactory' rather than 'good' due to the fact that there had been an error in the treatment of the estates strategy element of the restructuring funds within the ESFA spreadsheet which calculated the Financial Health Grade. However, the meeting

was given assurance that the Financial Notice of Concern was still on track to be lifted in early 2020. The useful dashboard of KPIs was commended. Governors noted that detailed comparative financial data for all FE colleges would be available by the end of May 2019.

The ESFA letter and Finance Dashboard for BCA at March 2019 was NOTED

There was no other business.

25/19 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting would be on Wednesday 15th May 2019 at 4.30pm.