

**Minutes of the Corporation Meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2020 via Zoom**

**Governors Present:** Max Hailey (Chair), David Bainton (Vice Chair), Ian Harper, Anne-Marie McNeill, Jackie Campbell, Eddie Weiss, Julie Gillespie, Nick Bevan, Amir Khaki, Bethan Waters, Andra Mirica, Josh Holdsworth

**In Attendance:** John McGrath (VP, Corporate Services (VPCS)), Clare Rooney (VP, Learning & Quality (VPL&Q)), Anna Smith (Clerk to Corporation)

	AGENDA ITEM	Evidence of Support & Challenge (S / C)
1.	<p><b>INTRODUCTION</b></p> <p>The Chair opened the meeting noting apologies from the Principal due to a family bereavement. The Board formally recorded their condolences.</p> <p>The new student Governor, Josh Holdsworth, was welcomed to his first Corporation meeting. The Chair noted his thanks to all those involved in the recent FE Commissioner visit. It was confirmed that the Board would be receiving an ETF funded board review and support from the Peridot governor recruitment service. Query was raised over the recommendation to move to a committee structure rather than the Carver model and it was noted that this would be further considered as part of the board review. The Vice Chair commented that the Board needs to understand the benefits and purpose of the change in model prior to agreement. The meeting was quorate and there were no new declarations of interests.</p>	
2.	<p><b>CLERK'S PAPER</b></p> <p>The Clerk briefed Members on her paper resulting in the following:</p> <p>The Corporation <b>Approved</b> the Terms of Reference for the Audit Committee for 2020-21.</p> <p>The Corporation formally <b>Noted</b> the results of the Governance Self-Assessment Review 2019-20 and <b>Endorsed</b> the Quality Improvement Action for 2020-21. Governors were encouraged to attend lesson observations during Impact Week in January. The VPL&amp;Q noted that she would arrange for the schedule of lessons to be sent to the Clerk for sharing with Governors (<b>Action: VPL&amp;Q/Clerk</b>).</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>S</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>S</b></p>
3.	<p><b>CONSENT AGENDA</b></p> <p>3.1 The Corporation <b>Approved</b> the minutes of the Corporation Meeting held on 15/10/20.            3.2 The Corporation <b>Noted</b> the draft minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 1/12/20.            3.3. The Corporation <b>Noted</b> the rolling actions log.</p>	
4.	<p><b>STUDENT UNION REPORT</b></p> <p>The Student Governors updated Members on activities across their main campuses:</p> <p><b>Amersham Campus</b> (Andra Mirica): The LGBTQ+ groups have started to meet online. Student Teams yoga is going well but students would welcome a questionnaire to find their preferred evening of the week for this. Students are considering a fundraising cake sale to help fund pronoun pins for students. Andra explained pronoun pins would be welcomed in supporting gender representation.</p>	

AGENDA ITEM	Evidence of Support & Challenge (S / C)
<p><b>Aylesbury Campus</b> (Josh Holdsworth): Students on Josh’s course have welcomed the blended model of learning as they have time to work on assignments in between lessons more easily. Students feel safe when coming into College as there are less students on campus. It was confirmed that there has been a meeting of the Student Union at each campus this term.</p> <p>The Vice Chair asked how concerned students are about Covid-19 at the moment and both Student Governors confirmed that their peers have raised no concerns and feel safe at College due to all the measurements in place at each campus.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the Student Governors for their update.</p> <p><i>Jackie Campbell joined the meeting at this point.</i></p>	
<p><b>5. REVIEW OF KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)</b></p> <p>The VPCS stressed the importance of Governors referring to and using the KPIs to address key points when considering management reports.</p>	
<p><b>6. PRINCIPAL’S REPORT</b></p> <p>In the absence of the Principal, the Chair took members through the report which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Covid-19 RESTORE Phase 2: The VPL&amp;Q briefed on the next steps in gradually bringing more students back into College in response to students’ needs and ensuring a continued safe environment. Query was raised as to any limitation on the number of students allowed in a campus at one time and the VPL&amp;Q confirmed the main challenge is at Aylesbury due to the high number of students but the aim is to achieve a minimum of 70% face to face learning.</li> <li>– Hampden Hall Update: Interest was noted over whether the meeting of the special planning committee in February would be a public meeting. Query was raised over the term ‘Deed of Dedication’ and the VPCS explained in context.</li> <li>– Bucks Health and Social Care Academy: Further information was requested and Amir Khaki explained the background and membership in supporting education, development and access for those seeking careers in health and social care. This links heavily with apprenticeships and offers good opportunities for work placements.</li> <li>– FE Commissioner Diagnostic Assessment: The formal report is awaited.</li> <li>– Student Recruitment 2020-21 and Applications 2021-22: Recruitment for 2020-21 is currently above allocation and applications for 2021-22 are very positive.</li> <li>– Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Annual Report: The Link Governor for EDI added his support of the report and welcomed any thoughts from other Governors on what they would like in future EDI reports. Query was raised over (i) whether the College should be following the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and (ii) are we looking at representation at a senior leadership/executive level? The Link Governor for EDI confirmed he felt this was the case. The College is following the PSED and provides detailed reporting on salary levels on the website. In terms of representation, EDI is considered in terms of Corporation membership and the Link Governor for EDI confirmed he would look into this further in terms of other levels of the College for future reporting (<b>Action: Nick Bevan</b>).</li> </ul> <p>The Report was <b>Noted</b>.</p>	C
<p><b>7. LEARNING AND QUALITY REPORT</b></p> <p>The VPL&amp;Q briefed members on her report noting the key focus is on approval of the draft Self-Assessment Report but which also included:</p>	

AGENDA ITEM	Evidence of Support & Challenge (S / C)
<p>– Progress against the key areas for quality improvement for 2019-20 and KPIs</p> <p>– Update on business development</p> <p>– Update on safeguarding processes</p> <p><u>Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 2019-20</u></p> <p>The VPL&amp;Q took Governors through the SAR noting that it had been moderated, externally endorsed and endorsed by the FE Commissioner team who reported that the SAR was “open, transparent and accurate”. All those involved in the process were thanked for their support and challenge. In scrutinising the report, the following were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ian Harper stressed that it is clear the main challenge for the Governing Body and the leadership team was apprenticeships which Requires Improvement. This area has been at a grade 3 for at least three years now and this needs to be challenged (and supported) not only to support apprenticeships but also to support and maintain the grade 2 leadership and management. The VPL&amp;Q agreed noting outcomes from 2019-20 were unfortunate as significant improvements were being made but furloughing and breaks in learning for apprentices had impacted on this. It is now the challenge to prove that had there not been a pandemic the College would have achieved its target and demonstrated a rapid improvement in-year. Ian added that attendance is the underpinning aspect of retention and attainment and this needs to be delivered on quickly to ensure employers are on board.</li> <li>• Amir Khaki queried how Governors are getting assurance that there is a coherent and deliverable action plan in place. The VPL&amp;Q confirmed that each curriculum area’s self-assessment results in a quality improvement plan for that area. The apprenticeship quality improvement plan is very comprehensive and is monitored on a regular basis with regular challenges to managers to ensure the position. This and attendance are the absolute areas of focus for improvement this year.</li> <li>• Nick Bevan queried whether it is feasible to move apprenticeships from a grade 3 to a grade 2 in the next few months and are the Good/Requires Improvement measures relative to the situation as affected by the pandemic? The VPL&amp;Q noted that grades do not tend to be altered in year but she will be assessing and aiming to prove that the confidence level of the grade is heading for a grade 2 by the end of the academic year.</li> <li>• David Bainton commented that it has been previously discussed that the High Needs provision is close to achieving a grade 1 and queried what needs to be done to achieve that grade 1 rating. The VPL&amp;Q confirmed more work placements are needed for high needs students and ensuring increased positive destinations.</li> <li>• Ian Harper queried whether any of the improvements required are likely to be limited by resource constraints. The VPL&amp;Q responded that currently resources are sufficient.</li> <li>• Nick Bevan raised an interesting point for the Board which had been discussed prior to the start of the meeting asking ‘Do we know what Outstanding means and what we need to do to get there?’ The VPL&amp;Q explained the grade 2 and grade 1 criteria analysis from the FE Ofsted handbook as part of the moderation process and noted in essence the College needs to ensure there is secure and consistent quality and outcomes for students in all areas across the curriculum.</li> <li>• The VPL&amp;Q reported that a recent AoC webinar had revealed that in terms of final ILR returns, the College SAR is identical to the national picture (i.e. L2s and L3s have done well but lower level learners have seen a decline in outcomes due to the impact of Covid-19).</li> <li>• Eddie Weiss queried to what extent do teaching staff receive regular training and the VPL&amp;Q explained the full professional development cycle in place for teachers. The different awarding bodies also require teachers to do a minimum number of CPD hours in their particular sector.</li> <li>• Bethan Waters noted following her link Governor meeting on English and maths one of the main challenges is retaining and recruiting experienced teachers who engage and motivate students who might have previously been failed before coming to College. To increase attendance and results in English and maths can we offer better financial incentives to attract</li> </ul>	<p>S&amp;C</p> <p>C</p> <p>C</p> <p>C</p> <p>C</p> <p>S&amp;C</p> <p>S&amp;C</p> <p>C</p> <p>S&amp;C</p>

AGENDA ITEM	Evidence of Support & Challenge (S / C)
<p>the best possible staff for the area? The VPL&amp;Q agreed that schools do award higher salaries and this is a challenge but a new English manager has been recruited and the College continues to be mindful of this. Amir Khaki added (via chat function) that unlike schools, the College can offer a more personalised development and more flexible working.</p> <p>The VPL&amp;Q explained the next steps for the SAR process and informed Governors of the plans in place to continue into next term replicating the inspection process within curriculum areas through deep dives and work scrutiny.</p> <p><u>Quality Improvement Strategy 2020-21</u></p> <p>The VPL&amp;Q briefed Governors on the strategy noting that the scope now also covers subcontracting which is a key focus for the subcontracted partners that the College works with.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anne-Marie McNeill noted that the achievements for Digital Native appear to have dropped quite a lot and queried whether this is due to Covid-19. The VPL&amp;Q confirmed this is the case and explained the in-year target completions and delayed completions who will now achieve in 2020-21.</li> <li>• Eddie Weiss queried how will the College measure whether quality has improved and the VPL&amp;Q explained how each area will measure its performance, progress and impact against its individual quality improvement plan.</li> </ul> <p>Ultimately, the Corporation <b>Approved</b> the College Self-Assessment Report 2019-20 and the Quality Improvement Strategy 2020-21.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the VPL&amp;Q for her comprehensive reporting.</p>	<p>S</p> <p>C</p> <p>C</p> <p>S</p>
<p><b>8. FINANCE AND RESOURCES REPORT</b></p> <p>The VPCS briefed the Corporation on the completed accounts for 2019-20 reminding Members of the ESFA funding rule changes and the year-end operating position.</p> <p>The Audit Findings Report had resulted in auditors (RSM) commenting that the College was the only college they represented who currently had an audit without control recommendations.</p> <p>The Chair of the Audit Committee reiterated that the Audit Committee had scrutinised the reports and informed the Corporation that the external auditors had been in attendance at the meeting and had, justifiably so, been very complimentary of the VPCS and his team. The Audit Committee Chair confirmed that the Annual Report and Financial Statements 2019-20 had been reviewed by the Audit Committee who recommended its approval to the Corporation.</p> <p>The Corporation <b>Approved</b> the Annual Report and Financial Statements 2019-20.</p> <p>The VPCS briefed on the current accounts for 2020-21 noting that apprenticeships and tuition fee income are on track with no material variances. Overall, the College is on track in terms of both deficit and cash flow.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the VPCS for his report.</p>	<p>S</p>
<p><b>9. GOVERNOR LINK AND ENGAGEMENT RECORD</b></p> <p>The Clerk asked Governors to continue with their Governor link meetings and general engagement in College life and noted sincere thanks to all Governors for their time and ongoing support for the College.</p>	

AGENDA ITEM		Evidence of Support & Challenge (S / C)
10.	<p><b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b></p> <p>Eddie Weiss as Chair of the Audit Committee highlighted the annual report of the Audit Committee to Members of the Corporation in formally recognising that this has been completed.</p>	
11.	<p><b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b></p> <p>11<sup>th</sup> February 2021</p>	
12.	<p><b>CONFIDENTIAL AGENDA ITEM</b></p> <p>The Chair thanked the Student Governors for their attendance and support and the Student Governors left the meeting.</p> <p><i>This item is recorded in the confidential minutes.</i></p>	

**Approved as an accurate record of discussions: 11<sup>th</sup> February 2021**