

**Minutes of the Corporation held on 21st May 2020 4:00pm
Virtual meeting**

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

<u>Present</u>	<p>Heather Du Quesnay, Chair Mark Robertson, Principal Tim Arthur Barry Fyfield Raj Kumar Mike Cole Martin Doel Nichola Harrison Daniele Gibney Martin Clapson Judith Coplowe Andy Jennings Lynn Morgan Theresa van Ruth (Staff Governor) Lewis Beddow (Staff Governor) Terry Butcher (Staff Governor) Muskaan Qadir (Student Governor)</p>
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In attendance Michelle Dowse, Derek Sharp, Laura Kerry, Kate Da Costa, Corrin Hoyes

Clerk Emily Baldwin

• Introduction		
1.1	Declarations of Interest	Apologies were received from M Cole, P Gaudin, C Wallace-Sayers and J Lancaster.
1.2	Apologies for absence	
1.3	Minutes of the meeting held on 25 th March 2020	<p>The minutes of the meeting of 25th March 2020 were agreed.</p> <p>Governors asked about the action on attendance. They noted it was difficult to get comparator information from other colleges at this stage and all colleges were prioritising assessments.</p> <p>In addition to attendance tracking of online sessions and the completion of work, the safeguarding team were monitoring</p>

		<p>students in vulnerable categories. This was in line with national guidance.</p> <p>Governors underlined the importance of having an appropriate process for tracking attendance on reopening in September, as online learning became integral to their overall package. They asked for SMT to give further information on this at an appropriate time.</p> <p>Governors noted that attendance for Maths and English was around 50-55% which was lower than attendance for other courses but was in line with the trend pre-lockdown. The College was making use of off-the-shelf resources for English and Maths which were being evaluated for their long-term use.</p> <p>The Chair underlined the importance of Governors and management making use of their own networks to find out about best practice</p>
1.4	Governor feedback	<p>A number of Governors had attended online lessons.</p> <p>D Gibney, H Du Quesnay, T Arthur and L Morgan all gave positive feedback on their experience of lessons. They noted that it was a very different experience for teachers and students, and inevitably made interactions between students and staff slower and less responsive. The teachers presented the work well and the students seemed enthusiastic. There had been different approaches in delivering the lessons. Online delivery had clearly been thought through well in the lessons they had attended.</p> <p>L Beddow reported that he had seen a number of lessons, and was particularly impressed by the support for those with special needs.</p> <p>Governors noted that there had not been any opportunities to attend English and Maths classes. M Robertson said that the focus of the department was now on ranking students and assessing Maths and English grades, rather than new delivery.</p> <p>D Gibney reported that she had attended an HE Quality Committee meeting.</p> <p>The Chair asked for the Governors' thanks to be conveyed to all the staff who volunteered to let Governors attend their lessons.</p>
Strategic Matters		
2.1	Principal's Report – Coronavirus update	<p>The Principal updated Governors on the status of the College's KPIs. There were a number that could not yet be reported, but the pandemic had meant a number of KPIs had</p>

	<p>deteriorated. External agencies had recognised that these were extraordinary times and the data would be reviewed differently from normal.</p> <p>The Principal updated Governors on the work the College had been doing to support learners during lockdown. Over 250 laptops had been delivered to students, along with 50 connectivity solutions.</p> <p>Governors noted the College’s approach to furloughing which had been discussed with the Emergency Planning Task and Finish Group.</p> <p>A College-wide group had been set up to discuss the issues associated with the re-opening. This included plans for social distancing and transport issues. It was expected that the continuation of online learning would mean that students would undertake a high proportion of their learning at home, although this would vary by course. The College was fortunate to have an experienced health and safety officer overseeing the risk assessment.</p> <p>M Quadir (Student Governor) confirmed that she had received a laptop and had been impressed by the College’s response to her request. She also had been given appropriate information on the process for Maths assessments by her tutor.</p> <p>M Doel and B Fyfield asked about the College’s current Tier 4 international licence. M Dowse had met with the Director of International at AOC and asked if there was opportunity for recovering the licence given the delays in Ofsted visits. In the meantime, the College was developing 6 month programmes starting in January 2021.</p> <p>D Gibney asked about the status of practical assessments that were necessary to secure a licence to practice. C Hoyes confirmed that the College was following the guidance of Ofqual, but it may be necessary to get a limited number of students to attend college over the summer in order to take their practical assessments. It was noted that this could be very challenging for the College as most teaching staff were on holiday in July and August.</p> <p>Governors asked if there would be a change in the definition of a full time student given online learning. There had been no confirmation on this. While online lessons could count towards a student’s learning hours, it was not clear how this would be audited.</p>
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		<p>A Jennings asked the College to consider future opportunities, such as training for furloughed staff who required retraining.</p> <p><i>T van Ruth joined the meeting.</i></p> <p>M Dowse confirmed that the College was working with the Cambridge Partnership on retraining and traineeships and engagement with employers. It was also discussing opportunities with the Combined Authority to encourage courses for those starting their own businesses, as well as graduate retraining and support for unemployed apprentices.</p> <p>N Harrison asked for further information on adult learning that was being delivered in London at an appropriate point.</p> <p>Governors noted the update on iMET. [Confidential item minuted separately]</p> <p>Governors noted the report from L Kerry on sickness rates which had dropped during lockdown. L Kerry confirmed that managers were in regular contact with staff. The lower rate of appraisals was in part due to the roll out of a new system which had some technical issues. A short survey would be sent to staff regarding their working conditions and wellbeing. Weekly meetings were taking place with union representatives.</p>
2.2	Report from the Emergency Planning Task and Finish Group	<p>H Du Quesnay gave a report on the Emergency Planning Task and Finish Group. She also reported on the discussion with the regional Ofsted inspector Jules Steele.</p> <p>It had been a very useful discussion: it was emphasised that Governors needed to understand that they were responsible for the College's performance across the board. The College required reliable data, greater awareness of the intent of all areas of the curriculum and clarity on the purpose of provision. The College needed to consider how it tracked progress throughout implementation and made governors aware of problem areas as they arose. There was an urgent need to ensure improvements were made at pace. Consideration should be given to Governors accessing Pro-monitor.</p> <p>The Clerk outlined a number of improvements that were planned for governance based on governor feedback and the Ofsted discussion. These included a new curriculum plan, tighter monitoring of actions and improvements to monitoring</p>

		<p>measures. The Chair would also be contacting governors individually on a regular basis.</p> <p>M Doel confirmed that it was important that Governors understood the processes and were assured they were effective, rather than undertaking the processes themselves.</p> <p>D Gibney said the discussion raised the issue of apprenticeships and ensuring issues were tackled quickly and did not fall between the cracks. It was agreed that Governors needed a holistic briefing on apprenticeships which included KPIs at different stages of the process, and would include some formative measures. Clarity was needed on the most appropriate committee to monitor different aspects of apprenticeships.</p> <p>T van Ruth asked whether there were plans to share the Quality Improvement Plan with staff members in its current form. Departments would value seeing how their plans fitted into the overall aims. It was noted that the plan in its current form was an internal planning tool for SMT and not appropriate for different audiences. Governors asked SMT to consider how to communicate to staff about key Ofsted improvement areas and how these were being taken forward.</p> <p>Governors asked for a checklist of DfE requirements for Governors' oversight for reopening. They also asked for a COVID Risk Register. This would be presented at the next Task and Finish Group.</p>
2.3	Financial report	<p>D Sharp introduced the financial report.</p> <p>The financial forecast and cashflow had been updated to take account of the outbreak of Covid-19. This included substantial income losses from the closure of commercial facilities, international students and business-oriented apprenticeship income, as well as the inability to recruit through the remainder of the year. The forecast also captured all cost savings identified from the closure of college premises and staff cost savings.</p> <p>The updated outturn showed a movement in operating deficit of £(1,266)k before redundancy and surplus on the sale of land. After taking these into account, the College forecast a surplus of £429k for the year against previous forecast of £608k in its latest management accounts.</p> <p>However, since the management accounts were finalised, the Greater London Authority (GLA) has confirmed that the AEB</p>

		<p>funding for the College which was initially expected to be protected would be reduced by 50%. Income on apprenticeships was looking more favourable and cash funding was confirmed as granted in relation to achievements and non-starts due to the virus impact. It was therefore likely that the College's out-turn would be marginally worse than that presented in the management accounts but would depend on other factors such as talks with the AoC on potential funding support.</p> <p>Following the decision to cease trading at iMET there could be a further impact due to the write-off of the loan balance of £400k. This however could be offset by the granting of the equipment purchased to continue delivery at other college locations, dependent on ongoing discussions.</p> <p>The College's cash position would be affected. Whilst the College was predicted to remain in funds throughout the period to July 2021 without use of the overdraft facility, estimates of cash receipts were still included for the current year which remained uncertain. Cash days would fall to well below the ESFA 30 days' threshold in Jan-March 2021 and could potentially mean early intervention, although there may be some concession due to the uncertain times.</p> <p>The College met with both the ESFA and Santander, who have expressed a willingness to be supportive to the sector. There was a potential for the College to breach one of the 5 bank covenants due to the operational loss total and debt service cover. It was agreed that the bank would amend the calculation to allow for COVID effect so that there would not be a breach given the level of asset and interest cost cover.</p> <p>The change in circumstances would have an effect on the draft college budget which would be updated for the June Corporation meeting. This would also take into account different types of delivery.</p> <p>Governors asked about the impact of the land sale. It was noted that without the sale the College would be reporting a deficit. It was important that this one-off sale did not distort any opportunities for funding support from government.</p>
2.4	Confidential item	Confidential item minuted separately.
Final matters		

	Any other business	M Robertson reported that applications were approximately 10% down compared to the same time the previous year. This was in line with the national picture, and it was hopeful that this was a delay in applications due to the current situation.
3.1	Matters agreed between meetings	Corporation noted the items that had been agreed electronically since the last meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointment of Lynn Morgan as Governor • Approach to iMET
3.2	Self-assessment of Governors' Performance	Governors agreed it had been a productive meeting. The aim would be for future meetings to be nearer 2.5 hours. Governors welcomed the new change proposal template.

There was no other business and the meeting ended at 7:00pm.

Signed

Chair