

**Minutes of the Corporation held on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020 5:30pm  
Virtual meeting**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**

**Present** Heather Du Quesnay, Chair  
 Mark Robertson, Principal  
 Tim Arthur  
 Raj Kumar  
 Martin Doel  
 Daniele Gibney  
 Martin Clapson  
 Judith Coplowe  
 Jo Lancaster  
 Paul Gaudin  
 Lynn Morgan  
 Nichola Harrison  
 Andy Jennings  
 Theresa van Ruth  
 Lewis Beddow

**In attendance** Michelle Dowse, Derek Sharp, Laura Kerry, Kate Da Costa, Corrin Hoyes

**Clerk** Emily Baldwin

<b>1. Introduction</b>		
<b>1.1</b>	Declarations of Interest	Apologies were received from M Cole and T Butcher.
<b>1.2</b>	Apologies for absence	Governors noted the action log that had been circulated before the meeting.  It was noted that the Government had announced increased funding for adult education which was a positive development for the College, although there were limited details at the time.
<b>1.3</b>	Minutes of the meeting held on 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2020	The minutes of the meeting of 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2020 were agreed to be an accurate record of the meeting.  T Arthur reported that he had attended the College over the summer and was impressed by the COVID related arrangements.
<b>2. Strategic Matters</b>		
<b>2.1</b>	Principal's Report	M Robertson introduced the Principal's Report.

		<p>College reopening had gone smoothly, and appropriate social distancing arrangements were being followed. A single case of coronavirus had been reported and appropriate measures had been put in place quickly on the advice of Public Health England.</p> <p>Enrolments for study programmes were now above target and last year's position at the same time. Internal progression was particularly high. Apprenticeship levels were below last year as expected and in line with national trends.</p> <p>It was not yet clear whether the College would be able to retain the equipment from the iMET venture which had now ceased. The position would be clearer by the end of October.</p> <p>Governors asked whether the College's sale of land at the Huntingdon campus could result in the College securing less COVID funding in the future. This did not seem to be the case at present.</p> <p>M Robertson clarified the different capital funding streams that were available to the College. The national capital programme had been apportioned dependent on college size. The funds needed to be committed, but not spent by March 2021. A plan for use of the fund for capital improvements in curriculum areas was being progressed. There should be further capital funding coming to the further education sector, although it was not clear how this would be distributed.</p> <p>Governors stressed the importance of delivering the adult education budget. The College had launched new online provision to help with achieving AEB targets. This remained challenging due to the loss of the GLA contract.</p> <p>Governors noted the KPIs for 2019/20, although some of the figures were not yet finalised. They also noted the new format of KPIs for 2020/21 which would be split across the Committees for scrutiny, with the full range going to Corporation. Governors asked that for activity that was updated monthly, the KPIs indicated a direction of travel as the cumulative numbers could hide trends.</p> <p>Governors noted progress against the Strategic Implementation Plan for 2019/20 and the new targets for 2020/21. Governors discussed whether the mission and vision in the Strategic Plan should be revisited. It was important to show the College was committed to providing students with a fully rounded education. It also needed to draw out the distinctiveness of FE with the different strands of provision it delivered. It was noted that the Strategic Plan was on the agenda for the January Strategy day.</p> <p>Governors noted the Risk Register. They asked that it be updated to ensure apprenticeship developments and enrolment rates were taken into account.</p>
2.2	Staff survey results	<p>L Kerry introduced the staff survey results that had been undertaken in July 2020.</p> <p>There had been a further marked increase in staff willing to recommend the College as a good place to work, with the staff satisfaction rate increasing to 93.5%. This was particularly pleasing given the different ways in which staff</p>

		<p>were asked to work over the course of the year. Governors noted the detailed analysis in the report. They asked about the comparison with outstanding colleges, and noted that there were a smaller number of outstanding colleges participating in the survey which could have skewed the results.</p> <p>Governors asked about the gaps between the campuses. Analysis by campus suggested consistency in staff views for the majority of questions asked. There were some differences, for example in communication and career progression, which were being investigated further.</p> <p>Governors said that it was overall a very positive result, and was a testament to the hard work of staff and senior management, particularly in the recent challenging circumstances.</p>
2.3	Curriculum strategy	<p>The College's new curriculum strategy was presented to Corporation. It was designed to cover the different types of provision the College offered. It was an important document in setting out more clearly the 'intent' of College provision in light of the Ofsted report.</p> <p>Governors asked about the weighting given to the construction sector in the document which did not come through strongly early in the document. It was agreed that this could be given more emphasis in next year's strategy as it was a growing focus for the region, particularly in Huntingdon.</p> <p>Governors welcome the document which they noted was the result of a good collaborative effort between different teams. Corporation approved the Curriculum Strategy for 2020/21.</p>
2.4	Safeguarding	<p>M Dowse introduced the safeguarding policy which had been revised in line with updates to national policy.</p> <p>M Dowse updated Governors on recent developments in safeguarding at the College, including the number of students with Child Protection Plans, Looked After Children and Care leavers. She also updated Governors on the number of Criminal Risk Assessments that had been undertaken.</p> <p>The transitions team had been working with the education providers from which students were transferring to identify the needs of students in terms of wellbeing and safeguarding.</p> <p>Risk Management meetings were continuing post lockdown where the Safeguarding Management Team assessed the most vulnerable student cases and the most appropriate course of action.</p> <p>The number of safeguarding concerns in the first two weeks of term had been about the same as previous years.</p> <p>Additional bereavement support was available and the number of referrals was increasing.</p> <p>Governors asked how the College was prepared for Ofsted, given that safeguarding was likely to be a key area of scrutiny. As well as ensuring correct procedures were in place, it was also important for staff to be in a position to be confident in their responses.</p>

		<p>Governors asked about mental health issues after COVID, and whether the College had sufficient resources to deal with the cases. M Dowse confirmed that the College had put additional resource into mental health and was undertaking a pilot with NHS trainees. P Gaudin stressed the importance of out of hours support and said that he would speak to M Dowse outside the meeting about contacts that might be able to help the College with this.</p> <p>Governors approved the Safeguarding policy.</p> <p>They also noted the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' document which had been circulated with the board papers for Governors to read and understand.</p>
<b>3. Matters Referred from Committees</b>		
<p><b>3.1</b></p>	<p>Matters for decision from the Emergency Planning Task and Finish Group</p>	<p>H Du Quesnay updated Governors on the main points arising from the Emergency Planning Task and Finish Group that had taken place on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• College reopening had gone smoothly with good compliance with social distancing arrangements in College</li> <li>• The Ofsted Improvement Plan had been updated following feedback at the meeting to include milestone dates and future actions</li> <li>• Restructuring in the English and Maths departments had been completed, although appointments to the heads of English and Maths posts were still outstanding.</li> <li>• An apprenticeship journey flowchart had been developed at the request of Governors</li> <li>• A new apprenticeship proposal had been scrutinised and welcomed as a good fit with the College's curriculum strategy. The template would be used for future new/innovative ventures of materiality.</li> </ul> <p>The Chair also updated Governors on feedback that she had received from a consultant helping the College with improvements in apprenticeships. The consultant had commended the staff on their openness and cooperation, and had suggested several areas for the College to focus on which were being taken forward. She had seen good practice in all areas of apprenticeships but it was clear there was too much inconsistency in delivery.</p> <p>Governors discussed the College's apprenticeship software (SmartAssessor) which needed to be updated to link with other management systems. It was unclear when the software would be updated and the College needed to look at other options if necessary.</p> <p>It was noted that the Chairs of F&amp;R Committee and Commercial Strategy Committee had discussed the relationship between the two Committees and clarified responsibilities.</p> <p>It was noted that the College had circulated a list of key employers to Governors and Governors agreed to pass on any appropriate contacts.</p>
<p><b>3.2</b></p>	<p>Matters for decision referred from the</p>	<p>T Arthur updated Governors on the main points arising from the Finance and</p>

	Finance and Resources Committee	Resources Committee that had taken place on 14 <sup>th</sup> September 2020: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Committee had met to take oversight of the project plan for the Huntingdon campus upgrade.</li> <li>• The Committee had noted the College's cashflow position, which was looking positive with no use of the overdraft over the year.</li> <li>• The Committee had discussed different options for the use of IBlock. Confidential wording removed.</li> </ul>
<b>3.3</b>	Matters for decision referred from the Search and Governance Committee	N Harrison introduced the main areas of discussion from the Search and Governance Committee that had taken place on 15 <sup>th</sup> September 2020: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The immediate focus for recruitment was on the recruitment of student governors and a new staff governor from Huntingdon. New governors would be sought for the Audit and Risk Committee over the course of the year.</li> <li>• Virtual meetings would continue until the end of the calendar year at which point they would be assessed</li> <li>• The Committee had reviewed the Governance Annual Report, and noted governor attendance of 80%. The annual governor survey had shown positive responses to questions on committee structure and membership, chairing of meetings, terms of reference and clerking. Suggestions for improvements were noted and being taken forward.</li> <li>• The Governor link scheme had been updated to include opportunities for Governors to scrutinise particular areas of College delivery. Governors stressed the importance of setting out clear parameters for the work in negotiation with staff.</li> </ul> <p>Corporation approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the current Committee membership, with no changes</li> <li>• the extension of T van Ruth's term of office to February 2023 (four years from the date of her appointment)</li> <li>• the Governance Improvement Plan, including Governor engagement plan</li> <li>• Terms of Reference with minor changes</li> </ul>
<b>4 Final matters</b>		
<b>4.1</b>	Corporation workplan	Governors agreed the Corporation workplan for 2020/21.
<b>4.2</b>	Any Other Business	Governors agreed the change in the College's Instruments and Articles to remove the requirement for the relevant Chair to sign minutes. The change would apply to minutes that could not be signed due to lockdown. <p>Governors noted that the seal had been used for the agreement with LPGS which Corporation had approved at the Corporation of 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020.</p>
<b>4.3</b>	Self-assessment of Governors' Performance	Governors asked that spreadsheets be more clearly marked in the future and where possible sent in excel format. It would be helpful if documents could be shared on the screen where appropriate.

There was no other business and the meeting ended at 7:40pm.

