

**Minutes of the Corporation held on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2022  
 Cambridge Campus 5:30pm**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**

**Present** Heather Du Quesnay, Chair  
 Mark Robertson, Principal  
 Tim Arthur  
 Martin Doel  
 Lynn Morgan  
 Nichola Harrison  
 Jo Lancaster  
 Tim Waller  
 Andy Jennings  
 Lesley Deacon  
 Bradley Dorrington  
 Neil Hunter  
 Jack Williams  
 Michael Killick (Staff Governor)

**In attendance** Michelle Dowse, Stephen Jones, Laura Kerry, Kate Da Costa, Corrin Hoyes,

**Clerk** Emily Baldwin

<b>1.1</b>	Declarations of Interest	There were no declarations of interest.
<b>1.2</b>	Apologies for absence	There were apologies for absence from Mason Friars, Jo Lancaster, Louise Armstrong and Paul Gaudin.
<b>1.3</b>	Minutes of the meeting held on 30 <sup>th</sup> March 2022	<p>The minutes of the meeting of 30<sup>th</sup> March 2022 were agreed to be a true record of the meeting.</p> <p>It was noted that Governors would be invited to a meeting with the College Management Group to discuss the 10 year vision.</p> <p>Governors noted the update on external applications to date. The College was currently reporting 200 additional applications in comparison to the same point in the previous year, although it was too early to be confident that these would convert to enrolments. Governors said it was important to understand the pattern of attrition rates from application through to enrolment and student retention. M Robertson confirmed that COVID had meant that many students had stayed at their school or progressed to sixth form college who might have previously come to the College.</p>
<b>1.4</b>	Feedback from College visits,	Governors reported on College visits and events that they had attended.

	<p>Student fora and conferences/training events</p>	<p>It was noted that B Dorrington had taken on the role of lead governor for student voice, and had had an initial meeting with M Dowse and her team.</p> <p>R Tunncliffe had been appointed lead governor for SEND and was arranging a meeting with the Head of Supported Learning.</p> <p>N Harrison had attended the end of year art show which she had found inspiring and impressive.</p> <p>L Morgan had a very useful AoC meeting with other chairs of L&amp;Q Committees in the region.</p> <p>M Clapson and R Tunncliffe had attended the CBI Regional conference at the College, and had been particularly impressed by the opening welcome from Student Governor M Friars.</p> <p>P Gaudin and M Doel had judged the College's Big Bid competition which they had found very rewarding and were impressed by the standard of the applicants.</p>
<p><b>2.1</b></p>	<p>Principal's Report</p>	<p>M Robertson introduced the Principal's report.</p> <p>Preparations were ongoing for the next Ofsted inspection which was now expected at the start of the next academic year. It was noted that there was a new requirement around meeting the skills requirements of the community, but there had been no formal guidance. Governors encouraged the College to consider how to increase the level of feedback from employers.</p> <p>The capital bid to the transformation fund for improvements to the Huntingdon campus had been unsuccessful. The sale of iMET was ongoing. It was confirmed that the College had secured the equipment as agreed. The College was exploring other opportunities to secure funding for capital projects.</p> <p>Student attendance remained challenging and was not yet at pre-COVID levels. Retention remained strong for study programmes and apprenticeship results were improving. The turnout for GCSE Maths and English exams had been particularly high.</p> <p>Staff turnover was high. Some staff had indicated pay was a factor in their decision to leave.</p> <p>Progress against year to date KPIs target was reported. M Doel asked about the progression to HE indicator which was marked as red. It was noted that this covered all HE, rather than just the College's and was a reflection of anxiety around COVID.</p> <p>The updated strategic implementation plan was noted.</p>
<p><b>2.2</b></p>	<p>Financial report</p>	<p>T Arthur reported on the discussion held at the F&amp;R Committee on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2022.</p> <p>The Committee had scrutinised Period 8 Management Accounts. The College's financial position had worsened and the revised forecast was a</p>

		<p>deficit outturn of £1,515k. Cash balances remained strong due to the sale of iBlock.</p> <p>The Committee had also reviewed the budget position for 2022/23. While the budget was still in progress, it was currently being built on the expectation of an overall surplus position of £250k. It was noted that the budget was in a more advanced position than in previous years, but there were still some areas that needed to be completed. The Committee was confident of the work that was being taken forward and that a final budget could be brought to the June Corporation meeting.</p> <p>Governors noted the reduction in pay costs. J Williams asked how far this was a deliberate strategy. M Robertson said that the College had not implemented any restructuring programme but had not replaced some posts. It was noted that approximately one-third of staff had progressed up the incremental pay-scale over the year. L Kerry gave more information on the College's staff wellbeing programme. Governors were supportive of the College building a general staff pay increase into the budget subject to affordability, and viewed this as a critical investment.</p> <p>Governors discussed the College's cash position. It was important to understand the College's future cash position, and to understand the impact of depreciation on the College's profitability.</p> <p>Governors noted that over the medium term, the College needed to fully understand its financial model. In particular, it needed to consider the financial viability of its 16-18 and adult education courses, including an assessment of group sizes and the cost of student recruitment. It was important to look longer-term as the impact of COVID was still distorting the market.</p> <p>Governors noted the high staff turnover and difficulties in recruitment. Management information systems was a key area for improvement. It was also noted that the increase in safeguarding concerns did not come with additional funding</p> <p>Governors stressed the need to have a more detailed budget at the next F&amp;R Committee meeting. The short-term budget needed to take into account the College's longer-term strategy for the curriculum, as some changes could not be brought about quickly. The budget also needed to be clearer in some areas, such as a breakdown of the College's international income and more information on staffing costs.</p> <p>Governors asked for SMT to report back on curriculum choices for the longer-term, and to present a range of options including radical ones.</p>
2.3	Curriculum exception report	<p>M Robertson introduced the curriculum exception report.</p> <p>It was noted that there was some consolidation of courses for 2022/23 in order to improve efficiency and viability due to larger group sizes. In particular, Level 1 Motor Vehicle would transfer from Huntingdon to Cambridge for 2022/23. This provision was currently running at a small loss. New provision in Sports in partnership with St Neots Football Club would be introduced into Huntingdon for 2022/23 as well as apprenticeships in Carpentry and Electrical Installation.</p>

		Governors noted the report.
2.4	Overview of T-levels	<p>K Da Costa introduced the presentation on T-levels.</p> <p>Her presentation covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the structure and history of T-levels;</li> <li>- the programme of T-levels, including the importance of industry placement;</li> <li>- funding implications of T-levels;</li> <li>- CRC's plans for T-levels;</li> <li>- announcement on defunded qualifications;</li> <li>- challenges of T-levels</li> </ul> <p>Governors discussed the implications of the defunded qualifications on CRC students which affected 16% of the population. Concern was expressed that it was narrowing options for students particularly in health and social care.</p> <p>Governors also discussed the funding implications. More clarification was also needed on how achievement on work experience/industry placement would be measured when it was out of the College's control.</p> <p>Governors thanked K Da Costa for a very useful presentation.</p> <p><i>N Hunter left the meeting</i></p>
2.5	Equality and Diversity Strategy	<p>L Kerry introduced the updated Equality and Diversity Strategy and accompanying data.</p> <p>The strategy had been updated following feedback from governors.</p> <p>Governors <b>approved</b> the updated strategy.</p>
3.1	Report from the Commercial & Sustainability Committee	<p>M Doel updated Governors on the main areas of discussion of the Commercial &amp; Sustainability Committee which had met on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2022.</p> <p>The Committee had had a useful pre-strategy discussion on the environment underpinned by a presentation from S Jones and R Metcalfe about how environmental strategy was being developed and how sustainability was being embedded into curriculum. Governors had advised on the key elements they expected to see in the strategy.</p> <p>The Committee had also looked at the future of the apprenticeship model. The Committee had advised the College to consider its delivery model and to make sure it targeted some higher remunerated apprenticeships. This might include expansion of existing offer into Levels 4 and 5.</p>
3.2	Report from the Search and Governance Committee	<p>N Harrison updated Governors on the main areas of discussion of the Search and Governance Committee which had met on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2022.</p> <p>A schedule of meetings for 2022/23 had been distributed. It was noted that the May Corporation meeting would include a training session. There would</p>

		<p>be more focus on learning walks and governor engagement as these had been affected by COVID.</p> <p>The Committee had scrutinised the new Code of Governance and recommended its adoption. The Committee had noted the Clerk’s review of compliance with the new Code of Governance. The Committee had been comfortable with the key changes, despite concerns over the length of the code. There were some value-added areas that the Committee would address as part of the Governor improvement plan in the autumn term. An external review of governance would be scheduled in autumn 2023, as required by the Code and the ESFA</p> <p>Corporation discussed the Committee’s proposal to expand the remit of the Search Committee to cover HR issues, including oversight of the College’s equality and diversity strategy, and be renamed ‘Governance and People’ This would complement the Committee’s current focus on Governor improvement and training, and would ensure the equality and diversity strategy had sufficient scrutiny at Committee level. Staff pay, staff efficiency/utilisation, terms and conditions and any restructuring issues would remain with F&amp;R Committee. Corporation agreed the change, noting that terms of reference of the relevant committees would need to be updated.</p> <p>Corporation also noted that the Committee had held interviews for a new staff governor, and wished to make two appointments – one to sit on the Learning &amp; Quality Committee, and one to sit on Governance &amp; People.</p> <p><i>L Deacon left the meeting.</i></p> <p>Governors approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appointment of Neil Hunter as Chair of Audit and Risk Committee from July 2022;</li> <li>• Appointment of A Jennings as co-opted member of Audit and Risk Committee for the December meeting;</li> <li>• Appointment M Doel as Chair of Search Committee;</li> <li>• Adoption of Code of Governance;</li> <li>• Standing Orders, with one minor change to allow for an increase in the maximum number of governors in exceptional circumstances;</li> <li>• Change of Search and Governance to ‘Governance and People’ with expanded terms of reference;</li> <li>• Appointment of two staff governors Y Watson and B Gillespie.</li> </ul>
3.3	Report from the Audit and Risk Committee	<p>A Jennings updated Governors on the main areas of discussion of the Audit and Risk Committee which had met on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2022.</p> <p>The Committee had discussed the new risk management policy which had been welcomed by the committee. It had spent some time discussing the impact levels and had amended the financial thresholds slightly upwards. It advised that other committees should also review the thresholds.</p> <p>The Committee had approved the Audit Strategy memorandum which summarised the audit approach for the external audit of the College’s accounts. There were no major changes from the previous year.</p>

		<p>The Committee had also reviewed a number of internal and external audits. In particular, they had reviewed the ESFA funding audit which had identified a number of errors. The main errors were related to how apprenticeship off the job hours were calculated and planned, or where delivery of off the job hours had not been possible. The next step was for the ESFA to discuss with the College how much clawback was appropriate</p> <p>The Committee had welcomed the report on the review of key College policies.</p> <p>S Jones explained that the tender process had been completed for a new internal auditor. Governor N Hunter had been on the appointment panel. The recommendation was for TIAA to be appointed internal auditor.</p> <p>Governors approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk Management Policy (noting there may be further changes to the impact table in the policy);</li> <li>• Committee's Terms of Reference with no proposed changes;</li> <li>• Internal auditors' appointment for 2022/23.</li> </ul>
4.1	Cleaning contract	S Jones presented the outcome of the tender process to provide cleaning services. Corporation agreed the proposal to award the contract to Vertas Group Ltd for a 3-year period with the option to extend for a further 2 x 1-year period. The contract would commence on 1 <sup>st</sup> August 2022.
4.2	Matters agreed between meetings	Governors noted the items that had been approved electronically since the last meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appointment of Jack Williams as full Governor.</li> </ul>
4.2	Any other business - Sub-contracting	Governors noted and agreed the extension to two existing sub-contracting contracts - Go Train (£250k) and Learning Curve (£70k).
	Self-assessment of Governor performance	Governors gave feedback on the meeting. It was noted that hybrid meetings were challenging and it was difficult for those joining online to participate.
	Presentation to Nichola Harrison	The meeting concluded with a presentation to Governor N Harrison. N Harrison had been a Governor for 12 years and was most recently Chair of the Search and Governance Committee. She was thanked for her enormous contribution to the College over her time as a Governor. Her energy and commitment to the College would be much missed.

There was no other business and the meeting ended at 7:50 pm.