

**Minutes of the Corporation held on 30th March 2022
Cambridge Campus**

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Present Heather Du Quesnay, Chair
 Mark Robertson, Principal
 Tim Arthur
 Martin Doel
 Lynn Morgan
 Nichola Harrison
 Jo Lancaster
 Tim Waller
 Mike Cole
 Andy Jennings
 Lesley Deacon
 Mike Cole
 Theresa van Ruth (Staff Governor)
 Michael Killick (Staff Governor)
 Hannah Mizzen (Student Governor)

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

Clerk Emily Baldwin

<p>1.1 1.2</p>	<p>Declarations of Interest Apologies for absence</p>	<p>There were no declarations of interest.</p> <p>There were apologies for absence from Bradley Dorrington, Neil Hunter, Mason Friars, Richard Tunnicliffe, Martin Clapson and Paul Gaudin.</p> <p>Jack Williams from the Department of Education was welcomed to the meeting as an observer.</p>
<p>1.3</p>	<p>Minutes of the meeting held on 15th December 2021 Notes of the Strategy Day 17th January 2022</p>	<p>The minutes of the meeting of 15th December 2021 and notes of the Strategy Day on 17th January 2022 were agreed to be true records.</p> <p>Governors gave positive feedback on the sexual harassment safeguarding training and all governors were encouraged to complete the training.</p>
<p>1.4</p>	<p>Feedback from College visits, Student fora and conferences/training events</p>	<p>Governors reported on College visits and events that they had attended.</p> <p>N Harrison said that she had attended a meeting with M Dowse and the Student Services team. She had been particularly impressed by the sharing of good practice in the College, and the roll out of the student personal development portfolio.</p>

		<p>H Du Quesnay had attended the Student Union Forum, and noted the strong student engagement and interest in student enrichment.</p> <p>A number of Governors had attended PMBs. H Du Quesnay reported on the WBL Engineering/Construction PMB and said that she had been impressed by the level of scrutiny of the apprenticeship programme.</p>
2.1	Towards a 10-year vision for the College	<p>M Robertson introduced his 10-year vision for the College.</p> <p>The paper was based on a governor discussion at the January Strategy Day.</p> <p>Governors responded positively to the paper. They agreed it confirmed the purpose and mission of the College.</p> <p>The vision would provide a framework for the development of future strategic plans which set out clearly what outcomes the College was trying to achieve and how the College would be measured. The College needed to be clear what was meant by a leadership role in certain areas.</p> <p>Governors acknowledged that while this was a 10-year vision, there were immediate issues that the College needed to face. In particular, the College needed to be clear about its immediate financial position and to build its financial sustainability. It also needed to address rebuilding resilience in students following the pandemic.</p> <p>The document could be used as a check when the Strategic Plan was next reviewed. The documents needed to be consistent with each other. It could also be used as the basis of discussion with staff, students and stakeholders over the summer term. Talking to local employers over their future priorities could help the College bring more focus to its delivery to help build financial sustainability. Governors suggested incorporating questions/propositions into the plan to help the discussion.</p> <p>Corporation approved the 10-year vision as a think piece document.</p>
2.2	Curriculum Plan 2022/23	<p>M Robertson introduced the new Curriculum Plan which showed the changes that had been made since the last year.</p> <p>H Du Quesnay confirmed that the Learning & Quality Committee had also reviewed the document, and had welcomed the changes which were reflective of the current environment. There needed to be stronger financial awareness of the implications of curriculum choices in the future. Governors asked about the contribution level of courses. S Jones confirmed that this was being looked at in more detail this year.</p> <p>It was noted that an exception report would be brought to the next Corporation meeting detailing those proposed courses that did not meet the guiding principles set out in the Strategy.</p> <p>Corporation approved the updated Curriculum Strategy.</p>

2.3	Equality and Diversity Strategy and Annual Report	<p>L Kerry introduced the updated Equality and Diversity Strategy, with the accompanying annual report.</p> <p>She explained that there was a legal requirement to publish certain equality and diversity data and information on the College website. The AoC had also included more information on equality and diversity in its newly updated Code of Governance.</p> <p>Governors agreed with L Kerry’s approach to integrating the College’s policy and strategy, and to publishing it on the website.</p> <p>Governors recommended that the strategy included more references to non-binary, and the College’s support for gender-fluid students and staff. It also suggested that consideration was given to appropriate KPIs for Objective 4. They also suggested reference to the College Unions (Staff and Student Unions) where appropriate. They also advised removing reference to minimising complaints, as the College wanted a positive culture where students and staff could feel open to raise issues in accordance with the College’s whistleblowing policy.</p> <p>Governors asked for clarification on what constituted a student with disability; the number of students with disabilities had grown significantly and further breakdown of the classification would be helpful. Exam dispensation was a broad category, and did not necessarily equate to disability.</p> <p>The College needed to think about how it presented the opportunities for different segments of its student population. More information on the demographic of the student population would be useful.</p> <p>Governors discussed staff training and noted the range of training on offer, including training on unconscious bias. The College’s awareness of how it monitored students with protected characteristics had improved.</p> <p>Governors approved the current draft of the strategy, noting that it was still under development.</p>
3.1	Principal’s Report	<p>M Robertson introduced the Principal’s Report.</p> <p>He included an update on the likely timing of the Ofsted inspection, and the recent positive visit by the FE Commissioner.</p> <p>Governors noted the issues around student attendance, which were in part due to the impact of COVID in terms of illness and anxiety.</p> <p>Governors asked about the KPI on progression to HE which was below target. They noted that COVID might have had an impact on the students’ intentions to progress to HE. The College would continue to keep a close eye on the area.</p> <p>Governors agreed that this time of year was critical for monitoring applications and the attrition rate. A dedicated dashboard for this area would be useful so that swift action could be taken.</p>

		<p>Governors discussed the Local Skills Improvement plan, and the implications for the region. It was unlikely that the southern part of Cambridgeshire would have a new sixth form. Subsidised transport would be useful to encourage students to travel to Huntingdon if courses were to be divided between the two campuses.</p> <p>Governors <u>received</u> the report.</p>
3.2	Period 7 Management Accounts	<p>S Jones introduced the Period 7 Management Accounts.</p> <p>The revised forecast now estimated a forecast deficit of £1,267k as a consequence of a number of changes that have been factored into the revised forecast. Governors welcomed the introduction of a bridge analysis. The sale of iBlock would boost the College's cash reserves.</p> <p>Financial health was forecast to remain at 'needs improvement'. An immediate concern was a potential breach of the loan covenant. A Jennings asked about the implications of breaching the loan covenant, and Governors noted that this needed to be discussed further with the bank. S Jones agreed to seek an early meeting with the bank and report back to Governors.</p> <p>Governors discussed the reasons for the drop in forecast income. COVID had particularly affected consumer confidence on adult courses, apprenticeships and international. There was still uncertainty on adult education in the remainder of the year.</p> <p>Governors stressed the need for improved forecasting as it was disappointing that the budget position had changed so frequently. Governors needed to have more opportunities to ask questions during the setting of the budget for 2022/23, and have a better understanding of the assumptions underpinning the different income streams. Governors and managers needed to understand the financial model better, for example the impact of SEND students on the budget. It was noted that additional funding for 16-18 olds next year also required 40 more teaching hours (though it might be possible to set the extra hours that were already included in some courses against this requirement).</p> <p>T Arthur reiterated that the F&R Committee were taking a robust and prudent view of the budget process. There would be an additional F&R Committee meeting and informal briefings which governors who were not member of F and R would be welcome to attend before the next Corporation meeting to assess the proposed budget in more detail.</p> <p>Governors <u>received</u> the report.</p>
3.3	Risk Register	<p>S Jones introduced the Risk Register which was now in a new format.</p> <p>A Jennings reiterated the view of the Audit and Risk Committee that the new risk register was much improved, and particularly welcomed the addition of third party assurance and accountability for actions.</p>

		<p>Governors asked about the impact of the Ukraine war and possible influx of people needing education into the region. It was noted that the Combined Authority would fund students in such instances.</p> <p>Governors discussed the risk around staff morale. They agreed that it needed rewording as the issue of staff morale was not necessarily only an issue of communication. There were other issues affecting staff such as workload and the pressure to help students catch-up.</p>
4.1	Matters for decision from the Finance & Resources Committee	<p>T Arthur updated Governors on the main areas of discussion of the Finance and Resources Committee which had met on the 8th March 2022. As discussed at the start of the meeting, the Committee had underlined the importance of returning to profitability based on a robust budget in 2022/23.</p> <p>Other areas discussed included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subcontracting, and the need to reduce the level of sub-contracting below 25% of the ESFA contract in 2022/23 • Review of the Health and Safety termly report with one RIDDOR event but no other significant concerns; . • Review of the HR mid-year report which was comprehensive and included updates on issues around recruitment, staff pay and turnover <p>Corporation approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students Union and Social Club Accounts 2020/1 • The updated Capital expenditure plan 2020/21 • Student fees and regulations
4.2	Matters for decision from the Learning & Quality Committee	<p>L Morgan updated Governors on the main areas of discussion of the Learning & Quality Committee which had met on 21st March.</p> <p>Areas discussed included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledgement of the issue of student attendance and actions that the College was taking to support students returning to the College • Positive exams results for English/Maths GCSE resits • Promising apprenticeship rates year to date • Range of activities being undertaken by departments to embed environmental sustainability into the curriculum • Useful report on issues arising from COVID and the mitigating actions that were being taken by the College to deal with the issues. Confirmation that the COVID catch-up funding had been used for small group tuition in targeted areas • Comprehensive report showing continued high level of positive destinations for students • Committee approval of Student voice strategy • Comprehensive report on sexual harassment
4.3	Matters for decision from the Commercial Strategy Committee	<p>M Doel updated Governors on the main areas of discussion of the Commercial Strategy Committee which had met on 24th February 2022.</p> <p>Areas discussed included:</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New strategic partnership with ARM, which had been welcomed by the Committee • Useful international pre-strategy discussion, with the view that the College should continue with its existing strategy of maintaining international relationships at a basic level until the market picked up • Apprenticeship curriculum offer, with a renewed focus on financial contribution of apprenticeships. The College needed to have a long-term direction of travel and ensure all of its apprenticeships met local needs and made a minimum contribution. <p>Corporation approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms of Reference • Change of Committee name to incorporate environmental sustainability
4.4	Matters for decision from the Audit & Risk Committee	<p>A Jennings updated Governors on the main areas of discussion of the Audit and Risk Committee which had met on 14th March 2022.</p> <p>Areas discussed included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of health and safety internal audit (adequate assurance) and GDPR follow-up audit (substantial assurance) • Review of GLA audit which posed no risk of funding clawback, but there were some recommendations to be taken forward. • ESFA funding audit which had not yet completed but there were significant draft findings and risk of clawback; S Jones confirmed that it was still outstanding but management had submitted some responses. • Comprehensive report on GDPR monitoring from C Hoyes which gave Committee high level of assurance • New scheme of delegation which would be updated on an ongoing basis • Update to Financial Regulations on use of petty cash and raising of threshold to get multiple quotes <p>Corporation approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor Scheme of delegation • Financial Regulations
5.1	Matters agreed between meetings	<p>Governors noted the items that had been approved electronically since the last meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointment of Louise Armstrong and Lesley Deacon as full Governors • Sub-contracting allocation (F&R Committee)
5.2	Any other business	<p>It was noted that it was the last meeting for Staff Governor Theresa van Ruth who was leaving the College. Theresa was thanked for her important input to Corporation and wished well for her future career. It was also noted that Mike Cole was stepping down from the Corporation at the end of April due to health reasons. Mike had played a particularly important role as Safeguarding Lead Governor and was thanked for his valuable contribution to the College.</p>

5.3	Self-assessment of Governor performance	Governors gave feedback on the first in-person meeting in two years. They agreed that it was positive to be back having meetings in-person but that the sound was difficult in the room. It was also difficult for those attending virtually to participate in the meeting. The Clerk agreed to explore solutions for the next meeting.
------------	---	---

There was no other business and the meeting ended at 7:45 pm.