



Minutes of the Extraordinary Governing Body Meeting held on 25 August 2020 at 5.30 pm via video conference

Present:	Libby Bush Vicky Buckle (staff governor) Shirley Collier (Chair) Jack Commandeur Helen Crews Janet Dean Rob Hickey Donald Inglis Ian Looker Grace Morrison (student governor) Kevin Moss Lee Probert (Chief Executive and Principal) John Robinson Mark Rushworth (staff governor) Andrew Thomas Fiona Thompson Owen Trotter Cathy Waters	
In Attendance:	Louise Doswell – Deputy Chief Executive & Principal, for Partnerships and Development David Hawkins – Vice Principal for Finance and Professional Services Glyn Jones – Vice Principal for Academic & Applied Education Graeme Murdoch – Deputy Chief Executive and Principal for Quality & Student Experience Sharon Smith – Vice Principal for Higher, Vocational & Professional Education Gareth Catterson – Interim Director of Governance	
<i>These minutes should be read in conjunction with the following PowerPoint presentation ‘College Re-boot – 2nd Phase’</i>		
B.21.01	1. Apologies for Absence / Declarations of Interest	Action
	Apologies for absence were received from Alex Hughes (Vice Chair). It was noted that the Principal would join the meeting as soon as possible as he was currently involved in another meeting There were no declarations of interest.	
B.21.02	2. Chair’s Opening Remarks	
	The Chair, on behalf of the Governing Body, expressed her thanks to the Senior Leadership Team and all members of staff for the enduring hard work they had put in with respect to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• delivering learning on-line and supporting all students,• handling assessments in an unprecedented way owing to last minute changes in the process as well as dealing with the consequential fallout,• preparing for the new curriculum and the new timetable from September onwards.	

B.21.03	<p>3. Change to Audit Committee Terms of Reference</p> <p>The Director of Governance explained that the proposed change to the Audit Committee Terms of Reference were to comply with the ESFA Audit Code of Practice and recognise the importance of the Committee by increasing the number of members.</p> <p>The Chair of Audit stated that she welcomed the proposed change.</p> <p><i>The Board resolved to approve the change to Audit Committee Terms of Reference</i></p> <p><i>Janet Dean joined the meeting.</i></p> <p>The Chair welcomed Janet Dean to her first meeting of the Governing Body.</p>	
B.21.04	<p>4. 2019-20 Regularity Self-Assessment Questionnaire</p> <p>The Vice Principal for Finance and Professional Services explained that FE college corporations had to complete a self-assessment questionnaire and pass it to their external auditor to help inform the regularity assurance engagement. The questionnaire, which had arrived after the July Board meeting, had to be approved by the Board. He drew attention to an additional return, Annex A, which was required specifically in response to the use of funds through the Covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p>There was discussion around large projects, what the financial threshold was that denoted whether a project was 'large' and whether the refurbishment of the motor vehicle workshop would be considered a 'large' capital project. If it was considered 'large', had there been sufficient on-going monitoring. The opinion was expressed that pre-authorisation had been good, but that monitoring could be improved and should be discussed at F&GP Committee.</p> <p>There was a question about the answer to termination of employment and whether it should be more detailed e.g. which specific policy had had been used. The Vice Principal for Finance and Professional Services said that he would provide the auditors with the voluntary redundancy paper that was submitted to the Board and add it to the answer in the questionnaire before signing.</p> <p>With respect to Annex A, the Vice Principal for Finance and Professional Services gave the opinion that there would be scrutiny in terms of double funding during Covid-19 and he assured the Board that he was confident there had been no double funding.</p> <p><i>The Board resolved to approve the 2019-20 Regularity Self-Assessment Questionnaire subject to the addition agreed.</i></p>	<p>DH/F&GP</p> <p>DH</p>
B.21.05	<p>5. Risk and Assurance for Opening of the College</p> <p>The Chair referred to the PowerPoint presentation 'College Re-boot – 2nd Phase' giving an overview of the work carried out. The Deputy Chief Executive & Principal (Partnerships and Development) stated that the number of workstreams had been reduced from 9 to 7.</p> <p>1. Curriculum Delivery Models</p> <p>a. 16-19 Students – was presented by the Vice Principal for Academic</p>	

	<p>and Applied Education</p> <p><i>The Chief Executive and Principal joined the meeting</i></p> <p>In response to a question about how the delivery model would be assessed and how quickly there would be an understanding of how effective it was the Vice Principal for Academic and Applied Education stated that plans for assessment were still being worked on but would include the responses from students, retention and learning visits which would be both in College and via remote learning.</p> <p>Regarding timetabling of the week in/week remote learning, Governors observed this would be very difficult and asked whether a timetable had yet been confirmed. The Vice Principal for Academic and Applied Education stated it had not been finalised yet, but it was not usually completed by this time in the year.</p> <p>Concern was expressed about all students having access to the IT equipment needed to join the on-line lessons. It was explained that part of the enrolment process was assessing students' IT needs to know what the College needed to offer in support.</p> <p>b. Other Students – was presented by the Vice Principal for Higher, Vocational, & Professional Education</p> <p>The Chair noted that Assessors had more to do than in normal circumstances and questioned whether there were enough to cover the extra workload. The Vice Principal for Higher, Vocational & Professional Education reported that there were currently 2 vacancies but generally it was not a problem staffing up for the extra work.</p> <p>When asked for clarification about the delivery models, the Vice Principal for Higher, Vocational & Professional Education stated that there were different models for different courses and where possible teaching would be delivered on-line. However, it was recognised that, sometimes, seminars and tutorials may benefit from on-site delivery. There was no 'one size fits all' and delivery was tailored to the specific needs of each course.</p> <p>The Chair asked what would trigger changes to the current plans after half term and was informed that group sizes, a shift in national social distancing policy or a deterioration in student attendance and enjoyment were some of the major triggers to be considered.</p> <p>2. Student Information and Welfare Services - was presented by the Deputy Chief Executive and Principal for Quality & Student Experience</p> <p>Governors questioned how students' deteriorating mental health was identified and tracked and were informed that tutors maintained regular contact with their students, paying particular attention to mental health with follow-up contact where problems were identified.</p> <p>With respect to a question regarding whether students had enough information to know where they should be, and when, the Deputy Chief Executive and Principal for Quality & Student Experience stated that there was a conscious effort not to overload students with too much information during enrolment, however, there were specific plans in place for when they arrived at College to signpost them to the relevant areas, both through signage and in person.</p> <p>3. Health & Safety - was presented by the Vice Principal for Finance and Professional Services</p>	
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	<p>It was noted there had been a change to the presentation regarding face masks. Staff and students were now being asked to wear face masks in all communal areas. The College had purchased 10,000 washable face masks, enough to provide both staff and students with two each. Governors sought further clarification regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response to a positive Covid test – this would depend on the advice of Public Health England (PHE) and the local Public Health Team (PHT) at the time. Advice was constantly changing. Current advice was not workable so an emergency planning event with the Local Authority was scheduled for 1st September to establish workable plans. • Lessons from the summer when there were two cases in College – some students would not ‘social distance’ regardless of all advice and guidance, and therefore the focus was on ensuring staff observed the rules, so they were protected. • Taking temperature on entry – this would not be implemented as DfE guidance was that it was not a reliable way of prevention. • Wearing masks in lessons – this was not currently required owing to working in bubbles and all desks facing forward. However, students could choose to wear masks in lessons and teachers would be provided with visors if required. • Staff who were shielding – this would be assessed case by case, with individual risk assessments and the possibility to continue remote working. • Enhanced cleaning regimes – Students would be required to clean equipment and workstations after they had used them, and sanitiser misting machines were being purchased. • The Track and Trace service was poor, and the College was left to manage the handling of tracking and tracing contacts in the event of a positive case of Covid-19. <p>4. Communications and External Partnerships - was presented by the Deputy Principal & Chief Executive for Partnerships and Development</p> <p>Governors noted that ‘update emails’ were being sent out daily together with a lot of information to ensure students and parents were satisfied with the safety measures that had been established.</p> <p>5. Human Resources Management - was presented by the Vice Principal for Finance and Professional Services</p> <p>Governors noted that all staff had now been in College and were now more confident. There had only been three cases where staff had met with the HR Manager because they were still anxious.</p> <p>6. Estates, Onsite Services and Commercial Contracts – (supplies and services) - was presented by the Deputy Principal & Chief Executive for Partnerships and Development</p> <p>In answer to a question regarding whether any additional costs had been incurred from contractors owing to Covid-19, the Deputy Principal & Chief Executive for Partnerships and Development stated there had been none because the College had its own in-house delivery of on-site services. However, additional costs for this were £70,000 to date.</p> <p>7. Information and Data Services - was presented by the Deputy Principal & Chief Executive for Partnerships and Development</p> <p>Governors noted that ‘in College’ enrolments had fallen from 500 the</p>	
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	<p>previous year to 8 this year. The on-line application and enrolment system was working well.</p> <p>The Chair, on behalf of the Board, recognised the very challenging times in which the College was operating with great success. She thanked the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) and all staff for their hard work, enthusiasm and determination in the exceptional circumstances and asked SLT to relay the thanks and appreciation of the Board to all staff.</p> <p>The Chief Executive and Principal also wished to record his thanks for the fortitude and commitment of staff without which the College would not have got to its current position of being ready to open the College safely, and with a high quality educational offer and positive student experience.</p> <p><i>The Board resolved to note the 'Risk and Assurance for Opening of the College' report and supported the plans for opening the College.</i></p>	
B.21.06	<p>6. Exam Results Update and Consequences</p> <p>The Chief Executive and Principal gave a verbal report. He stated that he had never faced a time like he had experienced around the current exam results. It was very disappointing as it had been confusion rather than celebration.</p> <p>The consequences of the recent Government decisions were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity issues for universities • A large rise in complaints and appeals from parents wanting to know the justification for grades awarded, all fueled by the media. • An increase in Level 3 students, some of whom should have been on Level 2 and would find Level 3 too much of a stretch. Identifying these students would be complex and a pressing issue. • Fewer English and Maths re-sits leading to a temporary over-capacity in teaching staff. <p>There was discussion around the issue of students being on higher courses than they would have been on and whether there would be a knock-on effect in the future. The Chief Executive and Principal stated that although the college managed this process every year, it was likely to be significantly worse for the coming year. In addition, the struggling students would be more difficult to assess and identify given the circumstances in which they would now be taught. It was also noted that some students had not been taught for 5 months. All students would need more support.</p> <p><i>The Board resolved to note the Chief Executive and Principal's verbal report on Exam Results Update and Consequences</i></p>	
B.21.07	7. Date of the Next Meeting – 16 September 2020	
	The meeting closed at 7.10pm	
Signed	Approved remotely as an accurate record – 21 October 2021	
Name:	Shirley Collier (Chair)	
Date:		