



## Minutes of the Governing Body Meeting held on 20 October 2021 at 5.30pm in College 1F024/25

<b>Present:</b>	Ian Looker (Chair) Libby Bush Meltem Celek (Student Governor) Helen Crews Janet Dean Heidi Fraser-Krauss Rob Hickey Donald Inglis Ann Lees Kevin Moss Lee Probert (Chief Executive and Principal) John Robinson Mark Rushworth (Staff Governor) Owen Trotter Cathy Waters	
<b>In Attendance:</b>	David Hawkins – Vice Principal, Finance and Professional Services Graeme Murdoch – Deputy Chief Executive and Principal, Quality & Student Experience Cheryl Pearson – Personal Assistant to the Director of Governance	
	<b>1. Apologies for Absence / Declarations of Interest</b>	<b><u>Action</u></b>
	Apologies were received from Andrew Thomas, Glyn Jones and Catherine Duro, Interim Director of Governance.  The Chair started the meeting by introducing new members of the Board - Ann Lees, Heidi Fraser-Krauss and Meltem Celek.  There were no declarations of interest.	
	<i>There was a confidential session – attended by Independent Governors and the Principal only.</i>	
	<b>2. Minutes of Previous Meeting</b>	
	<b>2.1 Minutes of 7 July 2021</b>  The Minutes of 7 July 2021 were reviewed.  There were no observations/amendments.  <b><i>The Governing Body resolved to approve the minutes of 7 July 2021.</i></b>	
	<b>3. Matters Arising</b>	
	<b>3.1 Action Summary</b>  The actions summary was reviewed and noted.	
	<b>4. Principal's Report</b>	
	<b>4.1 Chief Executive and Principal's Report</b>	

	<p>The Principal provided an update on the recent Ministerial appointments to the Department for Education (DfE) and the current position of the Skill Bill in shaping the Government's policy thinking for skills. It was noted that the College was well-placed for this agenda, including having been the lead for the development of a skills strategy for York.</p> <p>There was substantive discussion around examination outcomes.</p> <p>It was noted that York College high grades had not risen at the same rate as the growth nationally. The grades given reflect our students' abilities and the process was approached with a high degree of integrity. It was also noted that the College had also sought to teach the full specification for all qualifications and therefore students' assessments covered all material.</p> <p>The Chair of the Q&amp;C Committee noted there had been a detailed discussion of this matter at the most recent committee meeting. It was expected that the SLT would evaluate the approach should the process need to be repeated in the future, taking account of the relevant national guidance. This was endorsed by other members.</p> <p>It was noted that there were fewer than 100 appeals from the grade outcomes and 4 or 5 went to the awarding body. The outcome from the examination boards was that none were upheld and that our academic judgment of student performance was endorsed by the awarding body.</p> <p>The Principal reminded governors that this years' results reflected the assessments made of their work, with no statistical moderation across the country. He went on to cite the difference between norm referenced assessments and criterion referenced assessments, with examinations largely falling into the former. This results in the overall proportion of grades being similar each year and that it will be a few academic years until we get a view on the comparable data with other institutions.</p> <p>Governors asked how Ofsted would perceive the College's data. The Principal stated that Ofsted no longer regard qualification outcomes as the most important factor in making judgements. Whilst it would give the inspectorate a starting point, the Principal was confident that the overall focus would be on the quality of education as they evaluated it, during an inspection.</p> <p>Governors asked about the impact of teacher assessed grades on this year's cohorts. The Principal noted that there had been an increase in the College's overall A Level cohort, whilst students numbers were broadly comparable with previous years. The Principal also noted that at the lower-end of grade outcomes it was disappointing that for a large number of GCSE English and Maths re-sit students, they have mostly been given a Grade 3, making the assessment of their actual starting point very important.</p> <p>Governors felt this matter should be raised nationally and the Principal agreed to discuss with the Association of Colleges (AoC).</p> <p>Covid rate monitoring was discussed and it was noted that the case rate was largely stable.</p>	<p><b>LP</b></p>
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	<p>Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) of Education, Skills and Children's Services (Ofsted) would be coming into the college to open the 'Your Experience' hub on 11 November. And that John Edwards, Interim Chief Executive of the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) would be visiting the College on 12 November as part of his immersion into his new role.</p> <p><b><i>The Governing Body resolved to note the report.</i></b></p> <p><b>4.2 Progress against Strategic Plan</b></p> <p>The Principal confirmed the rapid progress around Pillar Groups, which had also been considered at the Autumn round of the Committees of the Board.</p> <p>The Principal noted that further work was needed in developing an investment plan for the College and this would form the basis of a Board Seminar on 10 November.</p> <p><b><i>The progress report against the Strategic plan was noted.</i></b></p>	
	<p><b>5. Education &amp; Students</b></p>	
	<p><b>5.1 Safeguarding Report 2020/21</b></p> <p>The highlights from the report were discussed. With regard to the Prevent assessment process – there have been no referrals to the Channel Programme.</p> <p>There was a discussion around the growing number of domestic violence reports during the Covid pandemic. The Deputy Chief Executive and Principal noted that there was a new reporting arrangement in place to the College from the Police.</p> <p>It was asked that acronyms were not used, unless in full first.</p> <p>It was questioned how we check that our Safeguarding measures are working. The Deputy Chief Executive and Principal noted that cases and complaints were regularly reviewed and that staff training on safeguarding takes place annually.</p> <p><b><i>The Governing Body reviewed and noted the report.</i></b></p> <p><b>5.2 Equality and Diversity Report 2020-2021</b></p> <p>Report discussed.</p> <p>Governors discussed the equality and diversity report and noted its contents. Governors noted the differences in outcomes for some groups and asked what caused this. The Deputy Principal noted that all gaps had been closed over time, assessment methods had been different in the last two years and this may have been a contributory factor, especially where there tends to be a pattern that male students perform well in exams but may not always sustain their output in ongoing assessments, for example in coursework.</p> <p>Governors noted the consistent performance across ethnic minority groups in attendance and retention.</p>	<p><b>GAM</b></p>

	<p>Governors noted that the report on the College's gender pay gap and senior remuneration will be published alongside the statutory accounts.</p> <p>Governors asked about the diversity data for staff and were reminded that this is recorded and reported via F&amp;GP.</p> <p>Governors considered the College's Modern Slavery statement, which was previously approved. It was noted that there wasn't a clear section on the cultural aspects of this and it was agreed this would be reviewed before being re-published.</p> <p><b><i>The Governing Body resolved to adopt the Modern Slavery statement, subject to any changes in legislation and to remain on a 5 year review.</i></b></p> <p><b>5.3 Student Recruitment</b></p> <p>The VP for Finance and Professional services reported:</p> <p>16-19 numbers are presently below the same point last year.</p> <p>In Adult, there is a gap to bridge, though this is an all-year recruitment target.</p> <p>HE – there has been a reduction in recruitment which is reflected in the financial forecast.</p> <p>International Recruitment is positive, with more students recruited than planned.</p> <p>Apprentice numbers are very strong and are ahead of plan. This is being closely monitored for any impact on resources.</p> <p>Governors discussed the recruitment pattern and enquired whether the adult recruitment was a concern, given that there will be adults seeking retraining. The Chief Executive responded that there are adults seeking retraining, though, in York there are large numbers of highly qualified people who may not be eligible for public subsidy to access training.</p> <p>Governors asked whether e-Learning or a remote offer would assist with recruitment. It was reported that the College already has a remote learning offer for adults, but that there isn't a groundswell of demand for online learning.</p> <p><b><i>The Governing Body accepted the report as provided.</i></b></p> <p><b>5.4 Q&amp;C Committee Chair Report</b></p> <p>The Chair of Q&amp;C wished to reassure the Board that the focus was on student outcomes and the 'Your Experience' initiative and to keep our eye on student development which they wish to report back to board in the future.</p> <p><b><i>The Governing Body noted the report.</i></b></p>	<p><b>GAM</b></p>
	<p><b>6. Finance &amp; Resources</b></p>	

	<p><b>6.1 210/21 Draft Financial Statements</b></p> <p>The Vice Principal for Finance and Professional Services provided an update on the draft Financial Statements. The VPF&amp;PS reported that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The balance sheet will remain strong</li> <li>• Provisions have been made for any claw-back on the Adult Budget, though a business case has been submitted to retain funding</li> <li>• The overall outturn will be more positive than forecast</li> <li>• No substantive issues are expected arising from the audit.</li> </ul> <p>The VPF&amp;PS reported that the external audit was progressing well and the feedback has thus far been positive.</p> <p>The VPF&amp;PS also noted that an ESFA Funding audit review is taking place soon, carried out by PwC. The first activity will be on 29 November. It was noted that the deadline for submitted that statutory accounts to the ESFA may require extension as PwC have a deadline for 31 January to report their findings to the ESFA. RSM have agreed to work with PwC as the deadline is approached in order to establish whether they can sign-off on the statutory accounts in time for the normal ESFA deadline.</p> <p><b><i>The Governing Body noted the report.</i></b></p> <p><b>6.2 2021/22 Initial Position</b></p> <p>The waterfall chart was discussed which highlighted the key movements since the budget was set. This tracked back to a break-even position.</p> <p><b>6.3 Health and Safety Policy</b></p> <p>Governors were asked to approve the Health and Safety Policy which included amendments relating mainly to roles and responsibilities.</p> <p><b><i>The Governing Body resolved to approve the Health &amp; Safety Policy</i></b></p>	DH
	<p><b>7. Governance</b></p>	
	<p><b>7.1 Strategic Risk Monitoring</b></p> <p>Governors considered the College's risk register, noting it had been considered at Committees already this term. Governors asked why the Cyber Security risk remained with a net score of high, even after the mitigating actions were in place. The Chief Executive responded that the score remains high as even with the mitigations, it is difficult to mitigate the impact and therefore the net score is high.</p> <p><b>7.2 Receipt of ESFA Letter from the Interim Accounting Officer</b></p> <p>The Chief Executive outlined the letter from the ESFA in which their Accounting Officer set out the expectations on Boards and College Accounting Officers in maintaining financial probity and reporting</p>	

	transparently. The Chief Executive noted that much of the letter was a reaffirmation of known requirements and some were likely informed by a small number of cases of poor practice, such as related party transactions. Governors were reminded of the need to ensure that the Register of Interests was regularly updated.	
	<b>8. Audit &amp; Risk</b>	
	<b>8.1 Committee Chair Report – Audit</b>  The Chair of Audit stated that there were no substantive issues to feedback. There was a good session on ‘Your Experience’. The Chair encouraged members to view the ‘Your Experience Hub’ and get a feel for how this is a very positive space for students.  <i><b>The Governing Body resolved to note the report.</b></i>	
	<b>PART 2</b>	
	<b>9.1 Subcontracting Fees and Charges</b>  <i><b>The Governing Body resolved to note the report.</b></i>  <b>9.2 ‘Your Experience’ Introduction</b>  Governors noted the presentation pack and were encouraged to attend the opening ceremony on 11 November 2021, with her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Education, Skills and Children’s Services.	
	<b>SUMMARY MATTERS</b>	
	<b>10. Any Other Business</b>  The Chair of the Board noted that this as the final meeting of the Deputy Chief Executive and Principal for Quality and Student Experience. The Chair thanked him for his exceptional service over almost 20 years at York College and considerably longer in the sector. The Board endorsed these thanks and wished him well for the future.  There being no further business, the meeting closed. Meeting closed at 7.25pm	
	<b>11. Date of Next Meeting</b>  Monday 13 <sup>th</sup> December 2021, 17:30, Room 1F024/25	
Signed		
Name:	Ian Looker (Chair)	
Date:		