

**Minutes of the meeting of the Corporation held at Somer Valley Campus  
on Monday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022 at 15:30**

**Present**

Andy Salmon (AS)	Chair
Victoria Downing-Burn (VDB)	Vice Chair
Neil Wilson (NW)	Vice Chair
Jayne Davis (JD)	Principal & CEO
Paige Baker (PB)	(to item 11)
Erica Draisey (ED)	
Lisa Ford (LF)	
Allison Herbert (AH)	
Ahmad Mahmood (AM)	(to item 11)
James Mulock (JM)	(to item 11)
Mike Oram (MO)	
Ian Tavener (IT)	
Gary Waylen (GW)	
Jenny Williams (JW)	

**In attendance**

John Domaille (JD)	Assistant Principal (to item 11)
Saiyada Fazal (SF)	Co-opted Governor (to item 11)
Paul Fletton (PF)	Interim Director of Finance & Corporate Services (to item 11)
John Newton (JN)	Deputy Principal (to item 11)
Anne Roberts (AR)	Head of Governance

Attendance: 100%

**AGENDA ITEM**

**1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Welcome was given to Paige Baker and Ahmad Mahmood (student governors), James Mulock (staff governor) and Allison Herbert (external governor).

There were no apologies for absence.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest

### **3. CONFIDENTIALITY OF ITEMS**

The Board agreed that papers marked confidential on the agenda or on their cover paper were confidential.

### **4. MINUTES**

#### **4.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 20 December 2021 and any matters arising**

The open and confidential minutes of the meeting held on 20 December 2021 were APPROVED as an accurate record, subject to noting in 7.2.1 that progression and destination data would also be discussed at the Curriculum & Quality Working Group. There were no matters arising.

#### **4.2 Action Register**

Members considered the Action Register. Members asked that the amended Self-Assessment Report be circulated to members.

**ACTION: JN**

### **5. STRATEGY**

#### **5.1 Medium Term Business Plan**

The Principal presented the Medium-Term Business Plan roadmap targets together with the curriculum in context. She highlighted those targets that were mission critical and those that were important to in year performance. Members questioned the targets that had not yet been reached and the work being done in mitigation.

A discussion took place about adult education, the changes in demand particularly for reskilling in certain areas and the lack of funding for adults who were deemed to be over-qualified. The Principal would be meeting with WECA to discuss this area.

The Principal reported that the number of staff vacancies was now stabilising and good calibre staff were being secured although it was still an employees market. More agency staff had been used than usual. The three key themes for focus moving forward were people, EDI and curriculum.

The committees and working groups would take forward the priority targets and the Executive would update and report targets monthly.

#### **5.2 Principal's Update**

Members received a written update and noted the positive movement on a range of partnerships. The Principal reported on the bootcamps and the Ofsted visit taking place this week as well as the latest situation in relation to Covid-19. The College graduation ceremony for 2020/21 and 2021/22 students had successfully taken place on 27 January 2022 in the Assembly Rooms.

### **6. SCRUTINY**

#### **6.1 Management Accounts – November and December**

The Interim Director of Finance & Corporate Services presented the management

accounts including the income and expenditure statement, balance sheet, cash flow forecast and a graph showing actual and forecast cash since 2020. He focused on the latest, December, accounts which showed a £75k surplus for the first five months and a strong cash position of £4.7m. The headroom for each bank covenant had now been identified at the request of governors. He reported that apprentices were ahead of profile but the AEB was a risk area. The recent pay award had been included in the figures. A reforecasting exercise had just been completed and a review of the cost base would be considered by the Finance & Estates Working Group in February.

Members asked about contingency for those areas that had a shortfall in funding. It was reported that the reforecast would take this into account, as well as the swings in funding which were not unusual given government funding was paid in instalments. Members noted the accounts.

### **6.2 Estates Strategy Update**

The Interim Director of Finance & Corporate Services provided an update on the Estates strategy, following discussion by the Finance & Estates Group. Sustainability had also been discussed by members at the Board strategy day. Members commented that there needed to also be a focus on how energy and space were used, being mindful of future demand and the need for flexibility and adaptability. They noted the range of projects being progressed and supported the decision to decline the offer of capital funding for T levels as it necessitated a 50% contribution from the College which was not considered to be affordable.

It was reported that a progress update on the Estates Strategy would be provided to the Board in March. **ACTION: PF**

### **6.3 Gender Pay Gap Report**

Members received the annual Gender Pay Gap Report. The Principal reported that the gender pay gap had increased and this was partly due to pay increases for staff in hard to recruit subject areas. HR were analysing the results to identify any actions that could be taken. Members questioned the pay scales of some areas and noted that the workforce plan was key to ensuring a strategic approach. This would be an agenda item for the March Board. **ACTION: JD**

### **6.4 Strategic Risk Register**

The Interim Director of Finance & Corporate Services presented the Strategic Risk Register and highlighted changes and mitigations in place in relation to the 18 strategic risks agreed previously by the Board. Discussion took place in relation to the 3 highest risks identified and the actions being taken to move these to amber. Some of the other risks would be closed off by March and others, such as cyber security, would remain on the register given the constant threat. Members were assured of the mitigations in place to reduce the risk exposure and these would be monitored by the relevant committee/working group. Members commented on

the difficulty in trying to find the flexibility to respond whilst managing tight efficiency measures.

## **7. GOVERNANCE**

### **7.1 Governance Report**

The Head of Governance reported on:

- (i) **Governor Recruitment** - the closing date was 6<sup>th</sup> February
- (ii) **Board Self-Evaluation Questionnaire**– governors were asked to consider Board compliance against the Code of Good Governance, as circulated, and to complete, from the Board's perspective, the Questionnaire to enable the Board to assess its governance effectiveness. Newly appointment governors were not expected to complete the whole questionnaire. The results would be presented to the March Board.

**ACTION: AR**

## **8 ITEMS FOR APPROVAL**

### **8.1 Student Constitution**

Jon Domaille, Assistant Principal presented the revised Student Constitution which better reflected the updated Learner Involvement Strategy and changes in the student union. The learner representatives had fed into the revisions. The student governors reported that they met weekly with the Student Engagement Coordinator to share ideas and ensure support for students. They reported that the model was working very well in ensuring that the student voice was heard. Course reps and lead reps were interacting and providing feedback to management. One action from this had already enabled a change to tuition delivery in one subject area.

Discussion took place about how to better engage the students on issues discussed by the Board such as EDI and sustainability. It was noted that the learner rep meetings were themed and the output could be presented to the Board by the student officer responsible for that particular area. The Board agreed with this course of action.

Members asked whether the wording in section 2 Aims and Objectives 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph could be made more positive in relation to promoting and engaging those with differing views.

The Board APPROVED the revised Student Constitution and asked the Principal to review the wording in section 2.

**ACTION: JD**

### **8.2 Health and Safety Policy**

Members considered the Health and Safety Policy for 2021/22 which had been revised to include input from the College's external health and safety advisors. The College's Health and Safety Committee (which included the H&S link governor) had reviewed the revised Policy in December and recommended it to the Board.

Members asked about reporting arrangements to the Board. It was reported that the Board had agreed that termly reports and an annual report would be produced. Health and Safety data would also be on the monthly dashboard.

The Board APPROVED the Health and Safety Policy subject to the addition in the Policy of the reporting arrangements. **ACTION: PF**

## **9. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

None

## **10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **10.1 Board Strategy Day Actions**

The Chair thanked everyone, including all the Assistant Principals, for participating in the Strategy Day. The day had been extremely valuable in ensuring the Board had clarity on key issues and connectivity to enable strategic thinking. He would circulate 3 or 4 main actions after the meeting.

## **11. FUTURE MEETINGS**

28 March 2022, 23 May 2022 and 11 July 2022.

It was noted that the date of the June away day might need to be changed due to exams and governor availability. **ACTION: AR** to canvas members

## **12. CONFIDENTIAL BOARD (External Members only)**

### **12.1 Confidential Minutes of the meeting held on 20 December 2021 and any matters arising**

The confidential minutes (external members only) of the meeting held on 20 December 2021 were approved as an accurate record.

Matters arising

it was reported that Emma Channon had been appointed to the post of Assistant Principal (Facilities) and would join the College in March.