



Minutes of the meeting of the Corporation held in the Futures Hub, City Centre on

Monday 28 March 2022 at 17:00

Present

Andy Salmon (AS)	Chair
Neil Wilson (NW)	Vice Chair
Jayne Davis (JD)	Principal & CEO
Paige Baker (PB)	Student Governor (to item 10)
Erica Draisey (ED)	
Lisa Ford (LF)	
Ahmad Mahmood (AM)	Student Governor (to item 10)
James Mulock (JM)	Staff Governor (to item 10)
Ian Stevenson (IS)	
Ian Tavener (IT)	
Gary Waylen (GW)	
Jenny Williams (JW)	

In attendance

Emma Channon (EC)	Assistant Principal (Facilities (to item 5.1)
Sally Eaton (SE)	Assistant Principal and Designated Safeguarding Lead
Paul Fletton (PF)	Director of Finance & Corporate Services (to item 10)
John Newton (JN)	Deputy Principal (to item 10)
Anne Roberts (AR)	Head of Governance

Peter Marsh, Ben Neville and Tristan Le Butt, Peter Marsh Consulting (for item 5.1)

Attendance: 80%

AGENDA ITEM

1.WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Welcome was given to Ian Stevenson and Emma Channon attending their first Board meeting. Welcome was also given to PM Consulting for agenda item 5.1.

Apologies for absence were received from the following external governors: Victoria Downing-Burn, Allison Herbert and Mike Oram.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declaration of interest were received from the Chair in respect of the ISTART programme.

3. CONFIDENTIALITY OF ITEMS

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

4. MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 31 January 2022 and any matters arising

The minutes of the meeting held on 31 January 2022 were APPROVED as an accurate record. There were no matters arising.

4.2 Action Register

Members considered the Action Register. An update was given on the following:

- the amended Self-Assessment Report would be circulated to members very soon **ACTION: JN**
- Workforce planning and staff utilisation work was in progress and the People Plan would be presented to the May Board, alongside the Curriculum Plan **ACTION: JD**
- The Principal had reviewed the wording in section 2 of the Student Constitution. Approval would be sought from the Chair on behalf of the Board before it was re-issued. **ACTION: AR**

All other actions had either been completed or were on this agenda.

4.3 Outcome of Written Resolution

The Board noted that the written resolution to approve the appointment of two new external governors had been carried and therefore the following external governors were now appointed:

- Ian Stevenson from 1 March 2022 for a four-year term of office. Ian had been appointed on the Audit Committee
- Adam Gould from 1 July 2022 for a four-year term of office. Adam had been appointed on the Finance & Estates Working Group.

5. STRATEGY

5.1 Estates Strategy Progress Report

PM Consultants (PMC) presented a report on their work to develop a new Estates Strategy to reflect the changing agenda of Further Education for the next five years and to provide a dynamic and positive learning environment for students. Space planning, sustainability, condition and functionality of the estate were explored to provide the College with a range of future opportunities including funding options.

The estate had some very good buildings, but some were underdeveloped and in need of investment. There were many areas which could be better exploited. The Construction centre was one of the best industry standard spaces that PMC had seen.

During discussion, it was agreed that the Strategy needed to be fit for both now and at least until 2035 given the sustainability agenda. Timetabling was an area for further development and PMC reported on alternative models. They confirmed that they would need to review their data following the recent site visits. The Board asked about timetabling mirroring work practices. Commercial use and sweating of assets were important aspects to enable community and employer use and might require further upgrading of equipment and out of hours opening.

The student governors reported on some of the issues raised by learners which included the location of the library at SVC and the small room sizes in Midford with consequent effects on the student experience. Alternative spaces might be considered.

ACTION: JD

The Board asked how realistic the May timescale was in reviewing more efficient use of space and ensuring better sustainability for the future. PMC confirmed that this was achievable by looking at the MIS data, growth in numbers, blended teaching, types of student spaces dependent on the curriculum and prioritising key areas to give impact on learning and sustainability.

The Board thanked PMC for their excellent presentation and looked forward to the further development of the Strategy in May.

5.2 Financial Planning including Re-forecast Budget

The Board considered the Financial Forecast 2a Summary together with the I&E accounts and Forecast 2 report. The Director of Finance & MIS reported that since the re-forecast had been presented to the Finance & Estates Working Group on 28 February 2022, three issues had emerged which were likely to affect this re-forecast. These were identified on the Risk Register. [Confidential Minute],

The Board noted the actions being taken to mitigate the risks, which included monitoring by the Finance & Estates Working Group. A further update would be presented to the Board in due course.

5.3 Principal's Update

The Board thanked the Principal for her written update and noted the information about FE staffing nationally and the actions being undertaken by the College. Retention was also a key area of focus. An exception report on staffing would be created by the end of April for SMT to review.

6. SCRUTINY

6.1 Quality Improvement Plan

The Chair of the Curriculum & Quality Working Group (CQWG) reported on the Quality Improvement Plan discussions at CQWG in March and the results from the destination data now available. This was being drilled down by Group and other categories. It was noted that attendance was a national issue for both schools and colleges. The TLA Strategy was being implemented, linking to the staff development programme. Ofsted preparation was continuing, particularly with staff and those areas that were less well advanced. The Group had asked for other quality activity to be added to the Plan such as audits and external benchmarking. The Quality Dashboard would be updated for discussion at the May Board. **ACTION: JN**

The Board asked about the reduction in achievement rates particularly for apprentices. Covid and employer support was still having an effect, as was the withdrawal of the employer incentive payment. It was reported that the apprentice standards had changed and the delay in the standards being issued was also a contributory factor. The student governors reported on the lack of promotion of the apprenticeship programmes within the college. They also reported on difficulties in getting support for the UCAS process due to staff changes. It was noted that whilst this had been rectified, it needed to start earlier next year. The Principal would follow up on these matters with the student governors. **ACTION: JD**

The Board noted the current position and summary of key issues arising from the Plan.

6.2 Learner Voice update

The student governors provided a verbal update. They reported on discussions with the Green Officer about solar panels – this linked with Board's strategic discussions. Learners wanted more recycling bins, particularly in Reception and more space for learners. Feedback was also given about the support needed to learners in some subjects, particularly for practical courses and the availability of equipment. They reported that the support for English and Maths was very good. The Board discussed the issues and how to ensure communication was fed back to the Principal. The Board asked the Principal to check that PMC was consulting with students on estates matters and to follow up on the matters raised. The student governors were thanked for their honest feedback. **ACTION: JD**

6.3 Safeguarding and Prevent update

The Assistant Principal (Inclusion, Welfare and Alternative Learning) reported on key issues relating to safeguarding and Prevent as discussed by the Curriculum and Quality Working Group. It was noted that the number of students being referred to Welfare was increasing and many reported a mental health concern.

The Board were informed that the Welfare Team now had a fourth Welfare Officer. The Endsleigh student assistant programme was being promoted as a confidential 24/7 helpline to provide further assistance to learners. The Board was reassured to hear the views of the student governors that learners felt very safe and supported at both campuses. The Board agreed to revisit Safeguarding at the June away day and to invite the Senior Staff Welfare Officer.

ACTION: JD/SE

The Assistant Principal reported on the work being undertaken by the Prevent Board and the Prevent events being cascaded to staff and learners. The work being done was an excellent model of roll out. The Prevent Strategy, when approved, would be circulated to the Board.

ACTION: JD/AR

6.4 Management Accounts – January and February

The Chair of the Finance & Estates Working Group reported on the Group's scrutiny of the accounts which were presented alongside the Accounts Commentary, I & E Account, Balance Sheet and Cash flow. It was noted that the position had declined since December/January but cash remained buoyant. The Board discussed recruitment costs and Higher Education. The latter would be discussed as part of the curriculum strategy discussions in May. The Director of Finance & MIS reported on the new financial system which would result in a different report format in future. The Board noted the accounts.

6.5 Health and Safety Termly update

The Director of Finance & MIS presented the Health and Safety update for the period December 2021 to February 2022 and reported that there were no areas of concern. He reported on a range of activities including the work of the Health and Safety Committee (which met on 16 March 2022) and the planned and actual evacuation tests and changes to alarm systems. Lock down drills were planned to take place shortly. It was noted that no accident and incidents were RIDDOR reportable. He reported on the plans being developed to meet the revised PPE regulations from 6 April 2022 and for handling hazardous substances.

The student governors asked if the smoking area at SVC could be moved as it was near a road. The Principal would look into this.

ACTION: JD

The Board thanked PF for his comprehensive update and noted that the college would progress the issues identified in the report in order to continue to improve its health and safety arrangements. These would be now be managed by the new Assistant Principal (Facilities).

6.6 Strategic Risk Register

The Board considered the Strategic Risk Register which had been scrutinised by the Audit Committee and which would be reviewed again before the Committee next met. It was noted that the Board's committees and working groups had reviewed each of the risks in their remit and this greater level of scrutiny was working well. The

Board noted the mitigating actions and the work being done to reduce the risk exposure of the College.

6.7 Strategic Dashboard

The Board considered the updated Strategic Dashboard, focusing on the forecast outturn and staff turnover (the latter remaining consistent since December). The dashboard would be updated again in April.

7. GOVERNANCE

7.1 Board Effectiveness Review

The Chair thanked members for completing the Board Evaluation Questionnaire. The summary output had been considered by the Governance & Search Committee and was very much aligned to the discussions at the Board strategy day and matched the evaluation against the Code of Good Governance. The results would be taken forward by the Committee. He highlighted the Organogram diagram and recommendation for a People Working Group. The Board suggested a few changes to the positioning of the Enablers and Cross cutting themes. The Board agreed to take forward discussions about a People Group for consideration in May.

ACTION: AR to arrange discussion with VDB, JW and JD

7.2 Governance Report

The Head of Governance reported on the discussions at the Governance & Search Committee. All governors would be asked to complete a Skills Audit in May and to complete a DBS check if they had not already done one. Amendments had been made to the external governor recruitment process.

Two governors (Mike Oram and Jenny Williams) were coming to the end of their first term of office and had indicated to the Chair that they were willing to continue for a second term. NW proposed and LF seconded the proposal that they be appointed as external governors for a second term of office (1 August 2022 – 31 July 2026). The Board unanimously approved their re-appointments and thanked them for their contributions to the Board.

The Board also approved a link governor role for careers guidance (CIEAG - information, education, advice and guidance) and for this role to be taken up by the co-opted governor, Saiyada Fazal. The approval of this role descriptor was delegated to the Governance & Search Committee. **ACTION: ED/AR**

8 ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

8.1 College Governing Documents

The Board approved the recommendations from the Governance & Search Committee to the Instrument and Articles and Standing Orders in respect of the signing and publication of minutes and public access to meetings. **ACTION: AR**

8.2 College Financial Regulations

The Board approved the updated College Financial Regulations which had been extensively reviewed by the Audit Committee. These would be circulated to staff.

ACTION: PF

9. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

9.1 Finance & Estates Working Group. The draft notes of the meeting held on 28 February 2022 were noted.

9.2 Governance & Search Committee. The draft notes of the meeting held on 9 March 2022 were noted.

9.3 Audit Committee. The draft notes of the meeting held on 14 March 2022 were noted. The Chair reported on the changes to the Committee with a new Chair, new external governor and a new external auditor in place.

9.4 Curriculum and Quality Working Group. The draft notes of the meeting held on 16 March were noted. A further meeting was planned to review the Quality Dashboard.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

11. FUTURE MEETINGS

23 May 2022, 24 June 2022 (strategy day at SVC) and 11 July 2022.

12. CONFIDENTIAL BOARD (External Members only)

12.1 Senior Staff Performance & Remuneration Committee

[Confidential Minute]