

**Open Minutes of the meeting of the Corporation held via Microsoft Teams  
29 March 2021 at 17:00**

**Present**

Carole Stott (CS)            Chair  
 Andy Furse (AF)            Vice Chair  
 Dan Ball (DB)              Student Governor  
 Paul Blenkinsopp (PB)    Staff Governor  
 Victoria Downing-Burn (VDB)  
 Erica Draisey (ED)  
 Lisa Ford (LF)  
 Mike Oram (MO)  
 Laurel Penrose (LP)        Principal & CEO  
 Ian Tavener (IT)  
 Gary Waylen (GW)  
 Neil Wilson (NW) (from item 5.1)  
 Julian Young (JY) (from item 5.2)

**In attendance**

Jayne Davis (JD)            Deputy Principal & Deputy CEO  
 Sally Eaton (SE)            Assistant Principal, Inclusion, Welfare and AL  
 Paul Fletton (PF)            Interim Director of Finance & Corporate Services  
 Anne Roberts (AR)         Head of Governance (Secretariat)  
 Andy Salmon (AS)          Chair designate

Attendance: 100%

| <b>ITEM</b>   |
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| <b>1. Apologies for Absence</b>   |
| There were no apologies for absence.  |
| <b>2. Declarations of Interest</b>  |
| AF and LF in relation to item 4.1. It was noted that neither of them had any involvement on this matter.  |
| <b>3. Confidentiality of Items</b>  |
| The Board agreed that all papers marked confidential on their cover sheet were confidential. These are marked as (c).   |
| <b>4. Minutes</b>   |
| <b>4.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 26 February 2021</b>  |
| The minutes of the meeting held on 26 February 2021 were considered and approved as an accurate record. These would be signed by the Chair by electronic signature following the meeting. |

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| It was noted that the medium-term business plan would be updated to take account of discussion at the strategy session.   |
| <b>Matter Arising</b>   |
| <b>4.1.1 Chair Designate start date</b>   |
| <b>4.1.2 Partnership update</b>   |
| Members agreed that the Chair designate could remain for this item. It was noted that he had not been involved in the partnership discussions. The Chair reported that no further changes needed to be made following the MoU signed by the College and Bath Spa University (BSU) in October 2020. This had been re- issued to Board members.   |
| Accordingly, the Board confirmed the appointment of Andy Salmon as Chair of the Corporation from 1 April 2021 for a four-year term.   |
| <b>4.1.3 Actions Register</b>   |
| All actions had been recorded on the Action Register.   |
| <b>4.2 Minutes of the Confidential Board held on 26 February 2021 and matters arising (c)</b>   |
| External members of the Board confirmed the minutes of the Confidential Board held on 26 February 2021.   |
| <b>4.2.1 Matter arising - Chief Executive &amp; Principal recruitment timelines</b>   |
| The Board noted the recruitment timelines for appointment of a new Chief Executive & Principal.   |
| <b>5. STRATEGY</b>  |
| <b>5.1 Principal's update</b>   |
| LP reported on the following matters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The College had re-opened on 8<sup>th</sup> March to all learners and between then and 19<sup>th</sup> March, over 4k lateral flow tests had been done. She thanked the staff involved and JD for organising such a phenomenal exercise</li> <li>• Learners were back with a blended learning approach. The key focus was on SEN and practical work. The college would be undertaking formal assessments and information was awaited from the awarding bodies. As of today, the college could offer outdoor sports</li> <li>• The College was bidding for national and regional initiatives including three bootcamps, the setting up of a Business Standards Board with local businesses and BSU and capital funding for new T qualifications in engineering and business administration</li> <li>• Capital funding amounting to £450k for the T-level qualifications starting in 2021 had been received</li> <li>• She had attended a webinar in relation to taking forward the western gateway and was working with WECA and the chamber of commerce on a number of trailblazing initiatives.</li> <li>• The ESFA had launched a new strategic conversation to meet annually with the CEO and Chair and potentially some governors as required. The FE Commissioner would also attend.</li> <li>• An FE college elsewhere had had to close in March due to a cyber-attack. She assured members that the IT dept was constantly monitoring this area and liaising with JISC</li> </ul> |

Following discussion, LP confirmed that the ESFA had used a formula-based approach for IT upgrading for T level qualifications. There was no detail yet on the trailblazing initiatives as these were still under discussion.

## **5.2 ISTART (c)**

Confidential Minute

## **6. SCRUTINY**

### **6.1 Quality Dashboard**

The Board considered the Quality Dashboard 2020/21 which had been reviewed in detail by the Curriculum & Quality Working Group. ED, as Chair of the Group, provided an overview of the work of the Group which focused on ensuring the quality of the student experience and that learning was on track. She reported on the good retention rates and that the Group had asked for more information on vulnerable and disadvantaged learners and adult community learning (ACL) groups, as well as retention on E&M to be included in the next Quality Dashboard. The apprenticeships rates were good given the pandemic and further analysis would be done for the June meeting.

The quality of T&L and assessment and behaviour and attitudes of students was positive. The Group would be reviewing quality for online, face to face and blended learning. Governors would be provided with the opportunity to attend learner voice activities as observers. She reported that the processes and systems for applications and acceptances was much improved and she thanked Jon Domaille, Assistant Principal.

Members asked about the hard to reach groups, particularly the vulnerable and what had been done to help them back into education and training. It was noted that these groups often did not have access to digital resources and a lot of work was being done by the ACL team through hubs such as the Twerton learning centre, job centres, college newsletters and, for the younger groups, through Youth Connect and the Realising Talent initiative. Those classified as young carers, LAC and qualifying for free school meals were taken as a separate cohort. Student welfare was very active for these groups.

Members asked that close monitoring took place to prevent a disparity of learning achievement with those that were more advantaged. JD reported that she was working with B&NES to help the disadvantaged groups. Members asked that the figures be kept in the next dashboard to show the trends and direction of travel.

The Board thanked JD and the Assistant Principals for their work behind the data on the quality dashboard.

### **6.2 HR Dashboard**

The Board considered the HR Dashboard template outlining the key KPIs to be reported on in order to enable the Board to have sufficient oversight of measures relating to monitoring the Strategic Plan. JD reported that the dashboard would allow trends to be identified and the impact on the workforce. There would be a more detailed dashboard for the SMT to review. The AoC College workforce survey would also help benchmark some of the KPIs. She thanked VDB for her input to the dashboard.

Members welcomed sight of the new dashboard. They asked how career progression, internal promotion and collaboration which were in the people plan would be measured. JD reported that the staff satisfaction survey data would feed into this and she would consider if there were other measures. Member also asked for more detail by group on gender and ethnicity.  
**ACTION: JD** to reflect in the next dashboard.

### **6.3 Management Accounts – February 2021 (c)**

The Board considered the management accounts to 28 February 2021 which included a commentary and notes, an income and expenditure account, a balance sheet and a rolling 12-month cash flow forecast. GW confirmed that these had been subject to detailed review by the Finance & Estates Working Group on 22 March 2021.

PF provided a summary of the key points which included:

- a modest surplus of £45k (Jan deficit: £100k) after seven months
- the trend of improvement due to apprentices continuing to be pulled in to generate funding and further activity in the Adult Education Budget (AEB) revenue streams.
- The cash position had reduced to £3,139k as anticipated in the profile for February which was £163k better than predicted. Cash remained buoyant, representing 58 cash days in hand.

He highlighted the introduction of new criteria in relation to growth of the WECA AEB budget which would need to be managed, as well as an overspend on estates. The Chair thanked PF for his management of the financial position and members were assured to note the positive cash position and the forecast of a modest surplus.

### **6.4 Strategic Risk Register and Covid Risk Assessment (c)**

The Board considered the Strategic Risk Register which had been reviewed by the Audit Committee on 15 March 2021. The changes were noted as well as the addition of a new risk in relation to the recruitment of a new Principal. PF highlighted the timescales of the IoT refurbishment and mitigations in place in relation to any impact on new curriculum delivery in September.

The Board also considered the Covid Risk Assessment and mitigating actions associated with the re-opening of the College to all students from 8 March 2021. This risk assessment had been considered by the Audit Committee on 15 March 2021. JD highlighted two new sections relating to lateral flow tests and home testing and reported on the uptake of these and the impact on learners with protected characteristics. She reported that there was still a small testing site at SVC.

The Board approved the risk assessment in principle, accepting future changes would be made according to Government guidelines and where changes in circumstances required.

### **6.5 Health & Safety quarterly update (c)**

The Board considered the latest quarterly update. Confidential Minute

### **6.6 Safeguarding/Prevent update (c)**

The Board considered the latest safeguarding summary report. ED, as designated Safeguarding Governor, reported on the proactive approach

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| <p>and quality of the leadership in this area. She received monthly safeguarding reports and met monthly with SE, the Assistant Principal for Inclusion, Welfare &amp; Alternative Learning and the Lead Welfare Officer. She thanked JD and SE for their approach and monitoring of this important area.</p> <p>SE reported on the summary report and advised that a safeguarding internal audit had taken place last week. This would be scrutinised by the Audit Committee in June.</p>   |
| <p><b>7. ITEMS FOR APPROVAL</b></p>  |
| <p><b>7.1 College Financial Regulations</b></p>  |
| <p>The Board considered the updated Financial Regulations which had been reviewed by the Audit Committee on 15 March 2021. Following discussion, the Board resolved to APPROVE the College Financial Regulations.</p>  |
| <p><b>7.2 Anti-Fraud, Anti-Bribery and Anti-Corruption Policy</b></p>  |
| <p>The Board considered the updated Anti-Fraud, Anti-Bribery and Anti-Corruption Policy which had been reviewed by the Audit Committee on 15 March 2021. The Board resolved to APPROVE the Anti-Fraud, Anti-Bribery and Anti-Corruption Policy.</p>  |
| <p><b>7.3 Audit Tendering (c)</b></p>  |
| <p>Confidential Minute.</p>  |
| <p><b>7.4 T Level Bids (c)</b></p>   |
| <p>The Board considered the proposed bids for capital investment for two new T-level pathways for 2022/23 in Engineering and Business &amp; Administration.</p> <p>Members asked about the IT equipment, student numbers and the impact of Covid in terms of considering ventilation rates in any refurbishment. The Audit Chair reported more generally that a contribution analysis by curriculum area would be brought back to the Board in May. This would include the ongoing cost for replacement of equipment. <b>ACTION: PF</b></p> <p>The Board resolved to APPROVE the bids.</p> |
| <p><b>8. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION</b></p>   |
| <p><b>8.1 Audit Committee – 15 March 2021 (c)</b></p>  |
| <p>The Audit Committee draft minutes held on 15 March 2021 were received for information.</p>  |
| <p><b>8.2 Finance &amp; Estates Working Group (FEWG) – 22 March 2021 (c)</b></p>   |
| <p>The draft notes of the meeting of the FEWG held on 22 March 2021 were received for information.</p>   |
| <p><b>8.3 Curriculum &amp; Quality Working Group (CQWG) – 23 March 2021</b></p>  |
| <p>The draft notes of the meeting of the CQWG held on 23 March 2021 were received for information.</p>   |
| <p><b>8.4 Board Strategy Day – 26 February 2021 (c)</b></p>  |
| <p>The notes of the Board Strategy day held on 26 February 2021 were received for information.</p>   |
| <p><b>8.5 Senior Staff Performance &amp; Remuneration Committee (SSPRC) – 8 March 2021 (c)</b></p>   |
| <p>The draft minutes of the SSPRC held on 8 March 2021 were confidential to external Board members.</p>  |

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| <b>8.6 Corporation Governance Group (CGG) – 26 March 2021 (c)</b>  |
| The notes of the meeting of the CGG on 26 March 2021 were received and endorsed. Confidential Minute   |
| <b>9. Any Other Business</b>   |
| <p><b>Chair's last meeting</b></p> <p>As this was Carole Stott's last formal Board meeting as Chair of the Corporation, AF, the Vice Chair, thanked Carole for her exceptional service to the College over the last 8.5 years. She had been instrumental in steering the College through a successful merger, ensuring strong governance, good financial health and quality of provision. Her huge commitment had made a real difference to improving the skills and opportunities for learners in the community. The award of her OBE in December was well deserved.</p> <p>It was hoped that there would be an opportunity to thank Carole in person later in the year when Covid restrictions were lifted. Carole thanked the Board and the College and said she would always be a friend to the College.</p> |
| <b>10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b>  |
| 29 April 2021 17:00 (external members only – to appoint a new Chief Executive/Principal)   |
| 24 May 2021 at 17:00 (all members)   |

Approved: 24 May 2021