

Minutes of the Corporation meeting
Held on 10th May 2022

Present: Martin Wyn Griffith (Chair)
John Arnott, Peter Boucher, Simon Cove, John Dernie, Luke Hannigan,
Emma Jarman, Carole Kitching, Monica Lawson, Kathy Newman, David Panes,
Shereen Sameresinghe, Danielis Tirunas, Jim Webster

With: Stephen Horrobin, Deputy Principal Finance and Resources
Lynne Plested, Vice Principal HE and Curriculum
Patricia Denham, Interim Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality
Mary Prince, Interim Vice Principal Business Development, Marketing & Student
Development
Tracy Scaife, Head of Governance

201. Apologies for absence – received from Pradeep Bhardwaj, Tim Thurston and Rob Wheeler.

202. Disclosures of interest – received from Kathy Newman with regard to her employment with Nationwide Building Society with whom the college holds an account.

203. Minutes of the last meeting held on 8th March 2022 and matters arising – agreed as a correct record.

Matters arising raised as follows:

(a) Minute 178(c) Curriculum and Quality committee: 28th February 2022 – noted that the Self-Assessment Report (SAR) will be presented to the Curriculum and Quality committee in June and to the Corporation meeting in July.

(b) KPI (Key Performance Indicators) Dashboards – the meeting noted that governors were asked to submit their suggestions for items to be included in KPI Dashboards which will shortly be introduced. An item to look at these will be placed on the next agenda for all committees. Governors were reminded that this is to be seen as a tool to help the Principal and her team to run the business. The Dashboards need a direct line of sight to the Strategic Plan and will require regular oversight and monitoring.

204. Minutes of committees to note –

(a) Resources, Integration and Change committee: 5th April 2022 – the Chair of the committee advised the meeting of the main points raised at the meeting. These included the recruitment of students for the next academic year, the current attendance issue, the impact of inflation on services etc., and a high level review of next year's budget. At present the budget would result in the college being below the ESFA 'good' rating. The committee expressed a desire for the budget to reflect a position that would result in a 'good' rating as in the current year. The Deputy Principal Finance and Resources will be presenting a report to the next meeting of the committee regarding the early repayment of the current bank loan.

(b) Audit committee: 21st April 2022 – noted that these will be presented to the next meeting of the Corporation on 5th July 2022 for noting. The Chair advised that the meeting had considered the most recent risk management update including risks relating to the IoT clawback of funds, critical systems and an IT security update. Further work is still wanted with regard to a risk policy. The meeting received two

reports from the Internal Auditors and noted the upcoming internal audits that are taking place. The committee expressed disappointment at the length of time that is being taken to clear some audit actions.

205. Student Voice report – received and noted.

The Chair congratulated the student governors on another outstanding report and the great work that students are doing behind the scenes. The student governors advised that one of the main issues being raised by students is staff absence and cover provision. Cover is often provided by lecturers from outside of the subject or by Academic Instructors. One of the student governors advised that he had missed a number of practical lessons as there had not been anyone suitable to take them. The Principal advised that the college has experienced some staffing problems due to staff leaving, staff absent due to Covid-19 and other illnesses. Costs also need to be kept under review which means that the college cannot support over-staffing. It was noted that it is important that students raise these issues quickly with their tutor or curriculum manager. The meeting advised that it is important that students are informed and aware of who they should go to when they have these issues, the process and the theory need to be checked to ensure that they are working adequately.

The meeting queried the lack of process for reporting back to them on actions raised through the student voice report. It was suggested that for future meetings the student voice item be split into two parts – the report and an update on actions.

AGREED: *Principal and Senior Team to ensure process for student reporting issues work adequately; TS to split student voice agenda item for Corporation in to two sections – report and update on actions.*

206. Principal's report (including Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)) – received and noted.

The meeting noted that updates for the KPIs for Quality and Business Development and Employer Engagement will be forwarded by email by the Principal.

Reference was made to bids made under the Turing Scheme and the Principal advised that she would advise of the outcome of the bids when known towards the end of July.

With regard to 16-18 attendance the Principal advised that strategies are being amended and updated or replaced. Some actions have already been taken including better communication with parents and finding alternative ways to communicate with them if they cannot access the Parent Portal. The college is working with Swindon Borough Council to look at attendance as for some it is an issue that has gone through the whole of a student's school life, starting at primary school.

ACTION: *CK to forward KPI update for Quality and Business Development; CK to advise Corporation of outcome of Turing Scheme bids.*

207. Risk Management update and Risk Register red rated risks – received and noted.

The changes made to the Risk Register Changes since the last report were noted. With regard to the Institute of Technology (IoT) it was noted that there are concerns regarding the final account from BKBS driven mainly by the delays to the completion of the build. They have advised that the revised completion date for the building is now the beginning of July 2022. Junior officers from the Department for Education (DfE) have confirmed that they would be prepared to change the classification of some costs. Written confirmation of this is required. A letter was sent to the MPs who referred the college concerns to the Junior Minister for HE who has undertaken to speak with the company. The amount of labour currently on-site still remains low and below what is required to complete the build by the amended completion date.

It was further noted that the Audit committee agreed that the risk relating to market led exposure to material increases in both gas and electricity costs due to steep rises in unit costs should be owned by the Resources, Integration and Change committee.

208. Financial Regulations – received and noted.

RESOLUTION: that the final amendments to the Financial Regulations be agreed and the Financial Regulations be approved and adopted.

209. Whistleblowing Policy – received and noted.

The meeting raised concerns with regard to some of the contents of the report. It was noted that there are inconsistencies with regard to the title given to the person leading the Human Resources (HR) Team – HR Lead, HR Head, and Head of HR. The contact email addresses for the Chair of Governors and the Head of Governance need to be amended to generic position email addresses rather than their named email addresses with the Chair of Governors email delivering to the Head of Governance. Clarification is also needed with regard to the definition of ‘the college’ within the document. Repercussions of reporting incidents also needs clarifying. A question was also asked with regard to anonymous reporting and if there is a facility for this. The policy and the procedure need to be separate documents rather than being part of the same document.

Approval of the policy and an update on actions under the whistleblowing policy need to be added to the cycle of business for the Corporation.

RESOLUTION: that the policy be reviewed and amended as suggested by the Corporation and be presented to the next meeting of the Corporation for approval.

ACTION: *CK to advise HR of required changes to the whistleblowing policy; CK to present amended whistleblowing policy to the next meeting of the Corporation; TS to add approval of whistleblowing policy to Corporation cycle of business.*

210. Safeguarding update – received and noted.

The Safeguarding Lead Governor advised the meeting that both the Prevent Strategy and the Lockdown Strategy are currently being updated and will be presented to the Corporation in July.

With regard to the safeguarding update, the meeting asked if it would be possible for future issues of the report to include a section on Prevent including any changes to local risks particularly relating to county lines etc.

Approval of both strategies needs to be added to the cycle of business for the Corporation

ACTION: *TS to advise Director of Student Services and Safeguarding Manager of request for future safeguarding updates to include reference to Prevent and any changes to local risks; TS to add approval of Prevent Strategy and Lockdown Strategy to Corporation cycle of business.*

211. Equality and Diversity Annual Report – received and noted.

A query was raised with regard to some of the language included in the report, particularly the use of the term BAME which is no longer recommended by the Government. Also the report needs to be amended

with the removal of the word 'slightly' from the paragraph relating to disability and the comment with regard to part time staff in the paragraph relating to ethnicity.

The Interim Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality clarified what is meant by the term health learning.

Approval of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report needs to be added to the cycle of business for the Curriculum and Quality committee (first meeting of the academic year) and the December Corporation meeting.

RESOLUTION: that subject to the amendments referred to above the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report 202/21 be approved.

ACTION: PD to amend ED&I Annual Report 2020/21 as required; TS to add approval of ED&I Annual Report to cycle of business for C&Q committee and Corporation.

212. Any other business – none raised.

213. Date of next meeting – Tuesday 5th July 2022 at 4.00pm.

214. Marketing Review Action Plan – confidential minutes refer.

215. Ofsted Monitoring Visit – confidential minutes refer.

216. Confidential minutes of Resources, Integration and Change committee: 5th April 2022 – confidential minutes refer.

217. Confidential minutes of Corporation held on 8th March 2022 – confidential minutes refer.