

Meeting/Committee	Corporation Board Meeting
Date of meeting	10/02/21 (via Google Meet)

1 Declarations of Interest and Eligibility

The Chair requested Governors declare any interests at the appropriate time during the meeting.

The Chair declared an interest in the Retford Post-16 Centre.

2 Welcome, introduction and apologies

Attendees:

Catherine Burn	Chair of the Corporation
Jason Austin	Principal & CEO
Abigail Ward	
Angela Phillips	
Gareth Owen	
Heather Barnett	
Janet Pryke	
Jennifer Worsdale	
Joanna White	
Katie Curtis	
Mirella Palazzo	
Monika Rodzos	
Stephen Bulley	
Veronica Bruce-McCoy	

In attendance:

Tracey Mace-Akroyd	Deputy Principal/CEO
Tony De'Ath	Executive Director of Corporate Services
Kate Noble	Executive Director of Finance
Jane Hartog	Executive Director of HR & Marketing
Virginia Parkes	Director of Governance
Catherine Mollart	Head of Corporate Services

Apologies for absence

Lindsey Littlewood
Lauren-Mary Outram
Clive Howarth (ESFA)

3 Minutes of the Board meeting held on 16th December 2020

Resolved: The minutes of the meeting held 16th December 2020 were agreed as true and accurate record.

Resolved : The minutes of the Extraordinary Board meeting held on 26th January 2021 agreed as true and accurate record.

4a Actions outstanding and matters arising from previous minutes

Nothing outstanding or arising that isn't covered under the agenda.

4b Action Progress Report

Item 4 – Mapping of Enrolment figures against target - to be reported at the next Board Meeting.

Item 5 – Virtual Tour for Governors – The CEO reported that focus had been on the Virtual Open Events for students. Virtual Tours were not yet available (date on APR to be amended to 2021).

Item 7 – Virtual Strategy Day to be discussed in January – Director of Governance to progress this with the CEO.

Item 10 – Financial Accounts – The Chair of the Audit Committee said this item was actioned at the Extraordinary Board Meeting in January.

Item 11 – Policies – will be covered under the Agenda (item 18).

5 Appointment of Lauren-Mary Outram – Student Governor

The Director of Governance advised that Lauren-Mary Outram, a Performing Arts L2 student had been interviewed for the Student Governor post and the interview had been very positive.

Resolved: The Board approved to appoint Lauren-May Outram as Student Governor.

6 CEO update

6.1: The CEO had provided a report updating on progress since January 2020 to date and highlighted the following points:

- Governance – progress made in terms of the recruitment of new Governors and regular scheduling of sub-committees
- Property Disposals Update
- Cash Flow Update
- Scrutiny of Quality Improvement
- Update against new recommendations from July visit.

The Chair agreed that very good progress is being made and thanked the Executive Team for the work involved.

6.2: The CEO shared a presentation and highlighted the following:

- Covid cases, summary by Campus and by student/staff.
- Ofsted Progress Monitoring Visit – The CEO had already shared the outcome of ‘reasonable progress’ with Governors. The CEO stated that although he believed significant progress had been made in some areas, the Group did recognise that there are areas highlighted where improvements need to be made. The CEO highlighted the main points of the visit (verbal feedback subject to moderation, see attached feedback notes.)

The CEO believed the feedback demonstrated some strong positives. The identified areas for improvement are those areas in which the Group are aware of and working to improve.

The CEO advised that the Group will be offered a choice of either accepting a further 2-day Monitoring Inspection Visit or to move to a full Ofsted Inspection. The Chair asked if this was an SLT decision or a Board decision, the DCEO said that it was a management decision but the CEO/DCEO said that the Board would be consulted prior to the decision being made.

The CEO thanked the Governors who were involved in the visit and all those who have supported and also to the Deputy CEO for her role as nominee.

- The CEO had circulated the FEC Stocktake visit Report and highlighted the key points :
 - The Group has responded well to challenge
 - Good start to the academic year 20/21
 - Leaders were agile during the first lockdown which prepared the group well for second and third lockdowns
 - Google Classroom used well to observe T&L activities to support staff in digital capacity
 - Students spoke positively to FEC team around progress made on their learning and development of skills
 - Senior Leaders have adapted quality assurance processes to accommodate changes
 - A lot of positive comments about Governance and Leadership and said it had improved markedly over the past 6-months and specifically since the last visit in July 2020
 - Viewed agendas for Board meetings and said there was appropriate coverage of items, good discussion and decision making
 - Recruitment of Governors to strengthen Board and proactive approach to improvement and development
 - Fundamental review of Colleges’ strategic direction shaping the vision in line with the LEP priorities
 - Leaders demonstrated the ability to drive improvements in challenging circumstances
 - Quality assurance processes are robust and identify priority areas for improvements
 - TLA assured through Business Reviews, Walkthrough’s, Deep Dives
 - SAR process robust in arriving at judgement grades.

- The two new recommendations were :
- Monitor impact of role of Director of Adult Education and Contracts
- Mitigation actions are in place to potentially managing under-performance against P3 forecast.

6.3 – The CEO updated on general FE matters:

- Successful in securing £1.1M collaborative bid to deliver traineeships in South Yorkshire and East Midlands.
- Free school meals are continuing
- Digital bootcamps – in a consortium bid to deliver
- Bridge Court bid approved by D2N2
- Lateral flow COVID-19 testing is live on all sites – to date there have been no positive cases
- Distributed almost 600 laptops, a further 447 from DFE on their way
- Capacity to development fund – there will be no clawback due to challenging times
- Exams/assessments – ceased from 6th January, will be delivering a small amount, in safe conditions, after February half-term. The exams to take place are those where students need to pass in order to progress.
- DfE and Ofqual consultation on summer assessments – awaiting results of this.
- A further round of capital funding available to be bid for.
- 8th March reopening has been mooted but not confirmed, advised that a 2-week notice period for opening will be given. Expecting a roadmap from the 22nd February from DFE on how it might look for colleges.
- White paper – the CEO identified the key areas, specifically around employers/Chamber of Commerce. The Board discussed the specific aspects of the White Paper. Concern expressed about the reliance of the Chamber of Commerce to take a lead on employer engagement. The CEO updated on his recent meeting with Barnsley & Rotherham Chamber.
- Education Recovery Commissioner has been appointed, monitor outcomes/policies from this.
- The CEO updated on opportunities/key projects the group are involved with.

MP asked about timetabling and a flexible approach, would there be opportunity to deliver outside of normal 9-5, 5-day a week hours. The CEO advised that through curriculum planning the Group are considering how the College can be open in an evening, weekend and through holiday periods.

7 Committee Chairs Report – Quality & Standards Committee 20 January 2021

The Chair of the Quality & Standards Committee gave an overview of the recent committee meeting held on the 20th January. The Chair highlighted the main points of the meeting:

- Lengthy discussion about the HE SED at the Quality & Standards Meeting, following discussions, recommendation to the Board for approval
- Focussed discussions on the business reviews and curriculum performance report
- The committee discussed the under-recruitment of 16-18 year olds and the attempt to reduce the gap. The Chair advised that scrutiny will be on

this item over the next few weeks to see how it progresses and any impact on lagged funding

- Adult recruitment in January and any impact of lockdown
- Discussed curriculum delivery during lockdown and also digital poverty.

Resolved: The Board approved the recommendation to agree the HE SED.

8 Committee Chairs Report – Finance Committee 28th January 2021

The Chair of the Finance Committee presented her report giving an overview of the matters discussed at the meeting in January:

- Discussed the management accounts and parity with forecast. Impact of third lockdown would need to be considered once known and built into forecast
- AoC Pay Award – covered within confidential minutes
- Sub-contracting will be covered under the Item 11
- Noted that balance sheet is looking better on debtors, impacted by a new appointment within the finance team
- Recommendation from the Finance Committee to amend the Terms of Reference for the tenancy of the Chair of the Finance Committee to be extended to two years to bring in line with other Terms of Reference for other Committee Chairs.

Resolved: The Board approved the recommendation for the amendment to the Terms of Reference to extend the tenancy of the Chair of the Finance Committee to two years.

Resolved: The Notes of the meeting of 28th November were agreed.

9 Committee Chairs Report – Audit Committee 9th December 2020

The Chair of the Audit Committee advised that there was only one matter to update on additional to those that were discussed at the Extraordinary Board meeting in January:

- Following a Chairs Meeting, given the size of the Finance Committee Agenda, it was proposed the Audit Committee would continue to monitor the Health & Safety Action Plan arising from the recent Internal Audit Report. Once complete, Health & Safety Reporting would be revert back to the Finance Committee for monitoring.

Resolved: The Board approved the recommendation for the Audit Committee to continue monitoring the Health & Safety Action Plan.

Resolved: The Notes of the meeting of 9th December were agreed.

10 Risk Management Update

The ED:Finance updated on Risk Management Software and advised that a proposal from RSM had been accepted.

The ED: Finance advised that the Risk Management process will be rolled out to the College Management Team through March/April. In terms of overall implementation and training this would take up to 3 months.

11 Sub-contracting Strategy/Variations

11.1 - The ED: Finance advised that an updated Strategy had been circulated with the papers and asked for any questions.

The Chair asked about the overview page – and suggested wording be expanded around the 'long-term' partner agreement. The ED: Finance explained the delivery of the long-term partner. The DCEO and the ED: Finance said that additional evaluative information would be included and the Strategy updated.

JW mentioned the risk in terms of contract failure. The ED: Finance explained how this would be addressed in terms of quality/delivery and would be included within the contract. The ED: Finance agreed to expand and include a further point regarding ongoing monitoring.

The Chair of the Finance Committee articulated to board members the process for risk assessment of sub-contractors, carried out prior to engagement. In addition, it has been agreed that a list of sub-contractors will now include risk scoring to provide further clarity.

The DCEO advised that sub-contracted provision would be inspected and explained the quality assurance and monitoring processes to offer assurance. The DCEO said the overview of risk scoring would prove useful which could filter through Quality & Standards Committee and tie into the outcomes.

11.2 - The ED: Finance talked through the sub-contract variations requested. The Chair of the Finance Committee advised that the variations had been discussed in detail at the Finance Committee and the committee were recommending to the Board that these variations be agreed.

11.3 – The ED: Finance advised of discussions with JTL regarding sub-contract partnership to support Electrical Apprentices to complete. Future partnership was discussed with JTL.

The DCEO explained the current issues relating to the Electrical provision and potential risks.

The Chair of the Quality & Standards Committee advised that her previous knowledge of JTL had been very favourable.

Agreed (11.1): It was agreed that suggested amendment be made to the strategy and then submitted for email approval.

Recommendation: The Board agreed with the Finance Committee's recommendation to agree the contract variations.

Agreed: The Board agreed to the sub-contract proposal with JTL.

12 Asset Disposal

12.1: The ED:Finance advised of two asset disposals over £10k for Board approval.

Agreed: The Board agreed to the disposal of the land rover (once 2 quotes are received) and the tractor.

13 Estates Strategy

The ED: Corporate Services had circulated an updated Estates Strategy within the Board papers.

The ED: Corporate Services made note to the addendum in the Strategy which included details of the next phase of capital works, which was available to bid for. The ED:Corporate Services highlighted the Strategy in terms of the plans for the Construction provision at the Rotherham Campus.

Agreed: To pursue the proposal to relocate the construction provision at Rotherham Campus to meet the needs of curriculum, students and employers.

Agreed: To make a submission for further Capital Funds by the 15th March to support the above.

14 Cyber Essentials

The ED: Corporate Services had circulated a paper regarding Cyber Essentials with the Board papers.

The ED: Corporate Services gave a brief overview of Cyber Essentials and explained that an Application had to be approved by the Board.

MB asked about how this covered the transfer of sensitive data. The ED: Corporate Services said this was more about how to avoid cyber-attacks/safeguarding. The transfer of sensitive data is all processed by the Information Governance team and agreements are in place.

Agreed: Permission given for CEO to sign the application to progress Cyber Essentials.

15 Harmonisation

The ED:HR & Marketing had included a report within the Board papers. She highlighted the two main points relating to harmonisation:

- To ensure staff who were performing the same role across the group are paid the same rate for the job.
- To put back some of the salary differentiation that has been eroded over time due to the relatively large increases in the annual increase of the NLW.

The ED: HR & Marketing advised that harmonisation of holidays is a little more complex and over time would be rectified. The move to having one holiday year, for all staff, will also be addressed.

VM asked if the harmonisation was within the budget, the ED: HR & Marketing said this had been worked on in conjunction with the ED: Finance and it was within budget.

16 Safeguarding, Prevent Report & EDI

The DCEO advised that this report had been to the Quality & Standards Group.

The DCEO did refer to the Safeguarding Training within the report (first paragraph) and said that there was work to be done around reporting as the issue was not accurately reported. The issue relating to learners understanding of risks was actually about learners articulating their understanding, not about their actual understanding of risk. There is no concern about learners understanding the risk which was confirmed during the progress monitoring visit.

17 Governance Items

17.1 - The Director of Governance updated on training which had taken place by Governors, including training prior to this meeting on County Lines/Child Exploitation.

The Director of Governance also updated on outstanding training which had been undertaken.

17.2 – The Director of Governance referred to recruitment of a new Chair for the Audit Committee to replace Angela Phillips who was stepping down from end March 2021 when her tenancy ends. This had been discussed at the Audit Committee and expressions of interest submitted. One expression of interest has been submitted from Stephen Bulley and was well supported from members within the Audit Committee. The Director of Governance asked for expressions of interest from any other members. There were no further expressions of interest.

17.3 – The Director of Governance referred to the written resolution which was circulated by email and asked for formal ratification.

Agreed: It was agreed that Stephen Bulley be appointed as Chair of Audit Committee from the 8th March 2021.

Resolved: formal ratification was agreed for the written resolution circulated on 23rd December relating to capital spend.

18 Policies for approval

The Chair advised of the following policies for approval which had all been submitted with the Board papers :

- Procurement Policy
- Recruitment & Selection Policy
- Safeguarding for All Policy
- Governor Expenses

Agreed: All four policies were approved by the Board.

19 Any other items

The Chair thanked the Chair of the Audit Committee for her valuable contributions to both the Audit Committee and the Board.

20 Date and time of next meeting

Wednesday 24th March at 5.00pm.

The meeting closed at 6.35pm

Signed _____ Chair

Date _____