

MINUTES OF A CORPORATION meeting
held remotely by 'Teams' on Thursday 28 January 2021
At 5.00 pm

Present	Martin Clark (Chair), Carlton Brand, Poppy Broster-Becker (until item 6/15), Amanda Burnside, Kieran Castle (from Item 6/4), Sam Fox (until item 6/6), Mags Patten, Lily Raynor (until item 6/15), Venetia Summers (until item 6/15), Katie Walker, Jack Wills, Adrian Windo
In Attendance	<i>Iain Hatt (Deputy Principal Curriculum and Quality), Julian Wood (Deputy Principal Corporate Resources), Heather Cross (Clerk to the Corporation), Jo Kelly, Safeguarding and Tutorial Manager (for item 6/4), Chris Moore, Finance Director, (for item 6/11)</i>

	Minute	Action
2020-21 6/1	Apologies for absence	
	Apologies were received from Harry Adam, Clive Barker, Mark Carrol and Jenny Davies.	
2020-21 6/2	Declarations of interest	
	None	
2020-21 6/3	Chair's opening remarks	
	<p>The Chair welcomed new governors Sam Fox and Adrian Windo to their first meeting. Other recent appointees had sent their apologies for the meeting as the meeting was at short notice following completion of their appointments. The processes for appointment for these new governors had all been concluded by written resolution recently and the Chair thanked governors for addressing and approving the appointments of Mark Carrol, Jenny Davies, Sam Fox and Adrian Windo in the last week.</p> <p>The Chair referred to the recent welcome news that the emergency funding from the Department for Education had received Ministerial approval, thus clearing the route for consideration of the year end accounts. The Year End Accounts represented a key item of business for this evening's meeting.</p>	
2020-21 6/4	Safeguarding & Prevent – updating training and review of annual report	
	<p>Jo Kelly, Safeguarding and Tutorial Manager, was welcomed to the meeting and made a presentation to the Board concerning the critical aspects of safeguarding.</p> <p>The Safeguarding Annual Report for 2019-20 had been circulated previously and governors noted the trends against the position in the previous year, the safeguarding actions from the previous year and the proposed actions from self-assessment.</p> <p>Governors received updating training and in considering the position were reassured that the college was adhering to safeguarding policies and</p>	

	<p>procedures and were keeping students safe. Carlton Brand as Safeguarding Link Governor expressed his support for the presentation which had been made and commented that the college represented a safe space for young people and whilst safeguarding referrals were up from the previous year, this was a positive as it reflected their view that additional help and support could be provided. Mental health was the area of biggest increase for support and therefore the college's decision to provide additional mental health support during the year had been validated. Governors asked questions concerning how the college reached out to vulnerable students studying at home during lockdown; digital wellbeing was more problematic with home study, but good communications picked up on this. It was noted that there were often more disclosures whilst students were on campus as it was seen as their safe space to do so.</p> <p>Governors asked about the safeguarding arrangements for sub-contractors and noted the action plan for Wilkes Academy, sub-contractor, was being updated following some recent safeguarding issues identified there, as stated in the Principal's report elsewhere on the agenda. The completion of such plans was part of the college's subcontractor due diligence. The updated action plan had been submitted to Swindon Council that day, noting that good progress had been made against the points raised, with policies refreshed and training delivered.</p> <p>Governors thanked Jo Kelly for her report which was received.</p>	
2020-21 6/5	Risk Appetite and Approach – presentation	
	<p>The Deputy Principal Corporate Resources gave a presentation to the meeting concerning the development of a revised risk management approach with the intention that governors and senior managers should regularly review the risk appetite to provide an agreed framework within which risk is managed in the college. The Deputy Principal as risk champion would have a role in the new system flagging changes in key dynamic risks over time and the consequences would be discussed by the Board. The Risk register would come to the Board 4 times a year, but where there were significant changes in the meantime, these would be reported. There would be clear reporting on where risk changes had occurred.</p> <p>Governors discussed the draft revised approach to risk which had been presented and agreed that this would introduce a clear and more meaningful, comprehensive approach, starting from the determination of risk appetite. The draft risk appetite statement was considered helpful. It was agreed that the approach was being developed appropriately, and that this work should be completed and the final arrangements returned to the Board for approval at the next Board meeting.</p>	DPCR
2020-21 6/6	Financial Recovery Plan – draft	
	<p>The draft Summary Financial Recovery Plan had been circulated previously. The Plan set out planned recovery areas and key actions to be undertaken to deliver forecasts and to assist in managing the associated risks in the current operating environment.</p> <p>The action areas and associated actions were reviewed along with the action plan showing progress. Governors asked questions concerning the senior team's sense of progress and commented from observation that the right approach and actions were being taken in a difficult set of circumstances from the external environment and working situation.</p>	

	Governors welcomed the detailed and comprehensive report and looked forward to continued monitoring of progress.	
2020-21 6/7	Initial Considerations on the March 'Awayday'	
	<p>A draft programme for the day was discussed and agreed, based on establishing a one year bridging strategy for the Strategic Plan, following the decision to roll-on the existing plan for one year, given the current circumstances. The day was planned also to encompass thinking as a result of the White Paper which had recently been published and other key developments.</p> <p>Governors agreed the outline approach and looked forward to the day at the end of March.</p>	Chair/ P/Clerk
2020-21 6/8	Principal's Report	
	<p>The Principal's report had been circulated previously, with key issues addressed being loan approval; apprenticeship challenges; Wilkes Academy update; support and campus access for vulnerable students; Exams update; impact of Covid on work experience and placements; delays to LEP projects; TCP bids update and progress with staff cost savings.</p> <p>Governors noted the recent governmental announcements concerning new schemes and explored in questioning how these might work for the college. The reflective review process for online learning being introduced was discussed, with final arrangements being discussed about the scheme with the teaching unions.</p> <p>The position concerning the LEP capital projects was noted. The College had given notice on the Tollgate premises recently, with the progress of the Salisbury campus scheme closer to completion. Publicity material concerning the new buildings would be circulated to governors.</p> <p>Progress in meeting the college targets in achieving 5% savings was discussed. It was noted that continued lockdown was creating more tiredness in staff but they were commended in maintaining extraordinary resilience and energy in keeping students engaged.</p> <p>The position for The Colleges Partnership was noted, with bidding opportunities arising for new Army contracts.</p> <p>Governors thanked the Principal for her report.</p>	
2020-21 6/9	Key Performance Indicators/Balanced Scorecard	
	The latest balanced scorecard which had been circulated was discussed and received.	
2020-21 6/10	Online teaching and Learning Update	
	The Deputy Principal Curriculum and Quality gave a presentation to the meeting summarising the development and range of approaches and actions taken to support online teaching and learning. Amongst many activities and initiatives governors were particularly interested to hear how video masterclasses using employers had gone very well which had been especially helpful in terms of work experience. Students were recorded as having spent high volumes of hours on Teams and whilst participation figures were good, it	

	<p>was recognised that long sessions online were not always conducive to the best learning.</p> <p>Governors commended the work of students and staff in their engagement with online learning and the innovative practices which had been developed over the past year and thanked Iain Hatt for his report.</p>	
2020-21 6/11	Year End Financial Statements and associated reports	
	<p>Chris Moore, Finance Director, was welcomed to the meeting for this item. In introducing this item, the Chair commented that the reports to be considered had received prior review at the recent Audit Committee and he thanked the Committee Chair and members for their work.</p> <p>a. <u>Internal Audit Annual Report</u> The Internal Audit Annual Report which had been circulated previously was received.</p> <p>b. <u>Regularity Self-Assessment Questionnaire</u> The Regularity Self-Assessment Questionnaire, in two parts – ‘Core’ and a supplement required this year following Covid-19 – had been circulated previously. These documents were signed by the Chair and Accounting Officer and had been submitted to the External Auditors to inform their audit. The Questionnaires were received.</p> <p>c. <u>Financial Statements Auditors Management Letter (Audit Issues report)</u> The Management Letter from Bishop Fleming had been circulated previously. There were no issues of concern. The Chair of the Audit Committee commented that the committee had paid careful attention to the assessment of ‘going concern’ and were satisfied from the Auditor’s work that the college would maintain this position at least until their next report, although the material uncertainty had been recorded as a result of the loan contract documentation having not yet been concluded and signed. This position was acceptable to the Education and Skills Funding Agency. The Management Letter was received.</p> <p>d. <u>Letter of Representation</u> The letter of representation to the Financial Statements Auditors was reviewed and it was agreed that the letter be signed.</p> <p>e. <u>Annual Audit Committee Report to the Board</u> The annual report which had been circulated was reviewed and the overall statement concerning the position of the college’s affairs was noted. The Vice-Chair commented that the Committee provided additional assurance to the Board and could confirm good arrangements. In particular he recorded his thanks and those of the committee to the work of the Deputy Principal Corporate Resources and the Finance Director whose support was excellent.</p> <p>It was noted that BDO had given notice to the college that it could no longer provide internal audit services and a tender exercise had recently been agreed to replace key internal audit services.</p> <p>Governors thanked the Committee for their report and the assurances it gave.</p> <p>f. <u>Members Report and Financial Statements 2019/20</u></p>	

	<p>The Members Report had been circulated previously and the document was reviewed. The Finance Director highlighted key information including the treatment of pensions and the explanatory reconciliation provided.</p> <p>The Members Report and Financial Statements were approved. It was agreed that the Members report and the Statement on Governance and all other parts of the document which required signature be signed.</p> <p>The Chair thanked all college staff involved in the production of the accounts, in particular the Deputy Principal Corporate Resources and the Finance Director. It was noted that after 3 years excellent service that Chris Moore was shortly to leave the college for another position and governors thanked him for his work, wishing him well in his new job.</p>	
2020-21 6/12	Management Accounts – November and December 2020	
	The Management accounts for November and December 2020 had been circulated previously. The key position with a focus on cash and some slight delay on the Capital projects was noted. It was also noted that some further mitigating actions may be required given a slight downturn on overall performance against budget. The position would continue to be closely monitored.	
2020-21 6/13	Minutes of the last meeting held 15 December 2020	
	The minutes of the last meeting which had been circulated previously were accepted as a true record.	
2020-21 6/14	Schedule of Actions	
	The latest schedule of actions which had been circulated was received .	
2020-21 6/15	Principal Appointment arrangements update	
	The current recruitment campaign was noted, with closure of the vacancy on 8 February 2021. Shortlisting was to take place on 15 February and interviews on 22 and 26 February. Staff and students would have an opportunity to engage with candidates on day 1 of the programme. The Chair thanked the recruitment panel for their participation in all the arrangements.	
2020-21 6/16	Skills for Jobs: Lifelong Learning for Opportunity and Growth (FE White Paper)	
	A summary of the key features from the White Paper had been circulated and was received. The Principal commented that the document indicated more encouragement of opportunities for regional working, but there was no financial settlement as yet behind the proposals. The implications of the White Paper would be explored further at the forthcoming Strategy Awayday in March.	
2020-21 6/17	Any Other Business	
	It was noted that the final version of the FEC Diagnostic Assessment report had been received. This had not been amended significantly from the draft which had already been circulated to governors.	
2020-21 5/15	Date of Next Meeting	
	This was noted as Thursday 25 March 2021.	

2020-21 5/16	Confidential Session	
	A short confidential session was held with external governors to discuss current restructure consultations and the potential implications of these.	