

MINUTES OF A CORPORATION meeting
held online on Thursday 18 November 2021
At 5.00 pm

Present	Martin Clark (Chair), Harry Adam, Clive Barker (from item 5), Carlton Brand, Mark Carrol, Jenny Davies, Sam Fox, Philippa Gray, Cathryn Giles, Iain Hatt, Lily Raynor-Blundell, Katie Walker, Jack Wills, Adrian Windo
In Attendance	<i>Ollie Symons (Deputy Principal Curriculum and Quality), Julian Wood (Deputy Principal Corporate Resources), Heather Cross (Clerk to the Corporation); Hilly Prendergast, for item 4 only.</i>

	Minute	Action
2021-22 3/1	Apologies for absence	
	Apologies were received from Mags Patten who was unwell.	
2021-22 3/2	Declarations of interest	
	None.	
2021-22 3/3	Chair's opening remarks	
	<p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. He reported that Kieran Castle, HE Student governor has recently resigned, and arrangements were starting in order to appoint his replacement.</p> <p>Governors had been informed previously that Julian Wood, Deputy Principal Corporate Resources had resigned and would be leaving the college to take up a new position during February 2022, in a college much closer to his home. The written resolution which had been passed in order to appoint a recruitment panel comprising Martin Clark, Adrian Windo, Mark Carrol, Jenny Davies and Iain Hatt, Principal and Chief Executive, was noted. The panel was due to meet with consultants the following day to choose the one to support the college in recruiting a new Deputy Principal Corporate Resources.</p> <p>The Chair commented on the recent successful Ofsted safeguarding monitoring visit where 'significant progress' had been recorded. He placed on record his gratefulness to Dr Carlton Brand concerning his commendable support to the college as the link governor for safeguarding, both during the visit and generally.</p> <p>The successful double graduation ceremony at Salisbury Cathedral on 5 November was noted, which had been an excellent occasion and the college had been delighted to welcome Michelle Donelan, MP for Chippenham and Minister for Higher and Further Education as the speaker on this occasion.</p>	
2021-22 3/4	Higher Education Quality Assurance Review – OfS Reporting requirements	
	Hilly Prendergast, Head of Higher Education Quality and Partnerships was welcomed to the meeting. Written reports had been circulated previously concerning student feedback on a range of issues, external examiners reports, the national student survey, work experience and student outcomes.	

	<p>A presentation was given to the meeting on the key issues.</p> <p>The requirement of the Office for Students that the governing body receives and tests assurance that academic governance is adequate and effective was noted.</p> <p>Hilly gave a presentation explaining that all the reports had been considered in the college meeting structure and feedback had been reflected on and actioned. The College was notable for the direct engagement that it had with its students, which was one of the marked differences from a university experience. This partnership working with students had been a strength in developing online teaching during lockdowns. Some resources had been issues during the pandemic, with the Learning Resources Centre not getting such a usually high score from students given that the personal use and support had inevitably been more limited. Comments from students about the lack of availability of hot food in college after early afternoon were being addressed through the supply of microwaves and kettles in common room spaces.</p> <p>Issues from examiners reports were being systematically addressed with the individual teams and bespoke training from course validators being followed up. It was noted that a separate HE website for the college was shortly to be launched which was part of an overall development of a stronger HE community within college and greater prominence for HE activity on campus. Governors asked questions concerning the teaching commitments of staff delivering HE courses where it was confirmed that additional remission was given on a pro-rata basis. Governors satisfied themselves about the actions taken concerning the one course where student comments had scored low following the departure of a specialist teacher, who had now been replaced.</p> <p>The Board received the reports and the presentation which demonstrated the adequacy and effectiveness of HE academic governance and confirmed its confidence in HE provision as a result of the review.</p> <p>Hilly Prendergast was thanked for her work in leading HE quality and assurance in what had been an exceptionally challenging year.</p> <p>Governors were delighted to note that the college had received two national HE awards for its film and cinematography course validated through the University of Bournemouth and delivered at Salisbury. The student who had won an award was to benefit from a paid internship as a result. These awards were real accolades for the college and its very successful course.</p>	
<p>2021 – 22 3/5</p>	<p>Principal’s Presentation</p>	
	<p>The Principal’s circulated report addressed a number of matters, including the following – College Management Group update; Ofsted Monitoring Visit; Staff Development; Staff Pulse Survey; Applications; Management Accounts’ Strategic Plan Development; LEP Projects; Lackham Land Disposal.</p> <p>Student behaviour was discussed, noting that there had been a significant increase in anti-social activity which was challenging to staff and management was working with colleagues to support them. The Principal gave governors some examples of issues raised by staff in the recent pulse survey and how these were being assisted. The survey had been deliberately set up as a quick snapshot and the levels of return over the two days it was open were seen as encouraging. Governors recognised that the last two years had been particularly turbulent and difficult for most people and it was positive that staff</p>	

	<p>were raising their issues, including their concerns on pay. Governors recognised that this was an issue that needed to be addressed as far as possible. It was also recognised that with fewer staff on campus as a result of a hybrid model concerning home working where suitable, whilst this was safer, some aspects of team/community spirit had reduced. It was agreed that the policy on working arrangements should stay agile. Regular and ongoing staff surveys were encouraged.</p> <p>A report was given concerning student achievement to date, as set out in the circulated presentation. Governors asked questions about some practical courses where achievement was low currently as a result of students not being able to carry out sufficient practical elements – these figures were expected to rise and would be examined further in the Self-Assessment report to be presented in December. The national policy change concerning T levels, whereby students would no longer have to achieve English and Maths qualifications in order to qualify, which was in parity to A levels, was welcomed.</p> <p>Governors requested that at a Board meeting in the Spring they receive an update report showing how the Bridging Strategic Plan priorities were being addressed.</p> <p>It was agreed that should the ongoing issue of the land at Lackham require action between governor meetings that delegation to the group of four governors comprising the Chair, Vice-Chair, Adrian Windo and Clive Barker should continue to operate.</p>	
2021-22 3/6	Balanced Scorecard	
	<p>The 2021/22 October Balanced Scorecard had been circulated previously together with a covering report highlighting key features. It was noted that the 16-18 enrolment final qualifying headcount was below the Curriculum Plan and 20/21 enrolment and it was unlikely that this would revert to plan during the year. HE applications were in line with previous academic years at this point; industry placements were on track and work experience numbers were positive; attendance was slightly below last year's position; Wiltshire market share numbers were awaited; T Level applications were quite low and more work was being done through Open Events to promote the offer; average group size was ahead of last year's figure, although still below college target and was rated red. A new measure on the percentage of FE courses above group size target was included. Staff turnover continued to be at higher levels than anticipated. Governors questioned whether some further thought should be given to whether the best metrics were being used to consider staff morale and staff satisfaction, whilst supporting the continued use of surveys. In discussion it was accepted that turnover and sickness levels were good proxies and offered comparisons over time, plus they were numerically and engagement-based. Governors reiterated their preference for identifying a suitable way of measuring performance on safeguarding through the Scorecard, and asked that management continue to consider this.</p>	SLT
2021-22 3/7	Risk Review and Risk Register	
	<p>A report had been circulated previously concerning the seven identified core risks, with the two scoring most highly being 'workforce capability and motivation' with staff turnover, workload and recruitment challenges remaining concerns and 'solvency' where failure to reach enrolment targets could impact on future income. 'Pay Cost and Staffing' was included in the full risk register</p>	

	for the first time. 'Covid Roadmap' now reached the reporting threshold. The LEP Projects now scored most highly in the topical risks, reflecting the ongoing issues with the Salisbury campus scheme.	
2021-22 3/8	Safeguarding Update	
	This was a confidential item and was minuted separately.	
2021-22 3/9	September 2021 Management Accounts	
	The September 2021 Management Accounts had been circulated previously and the encouraging financial position was noted and welcomed.	
2021-22 3/10	Recovery Plan Progress Report - Presentation	
	<p>A presentation was given to the meeting comprising the Q1 out-turn and key points. This contained a summary slide, as in the previous month's report, showing performance better than objectives for 2020/21 and the current forecast continuing to show an improved picture. The summary slide would continue to be the basis of reporting to governors.</p> <p>The progress in meeting FEC recommendations was reported and the positive current picture was welcomed.</p> <p>A verbal report was provided concerning the technical issues concerning the car park at Salisbury where adverse land conditions had been identified, as previously reported. Some preliminary costs had been received concerning solutions which might be implemented, but these were not yet formally confirmed, although it was certain at this stage that further costs would definitely be incurred.</p> <p>Governors were pleased to hear that the finance team was now back to complement and some surge capacity was being identified in order that some systems work could be undertaken to further enhance team stability.</p> <p>It was noted that inflation may present challenges to the FE sector. There had been some real time increases resulting from the recent government Spending Review, although the distribution of this was still unannounced.</p> <p>Governors thanked the Deputy Principal Corporate Resources for his report.</p>	
2021-22 3/11	Schedule of Actions	
	The circulated schedule of actions was noted.	
2021-22 3/12	Minutes of the last meeting	
	The minutes of the meeting held 21 October 2021, open and confidential, which had been circulated previously were agreed as a true record.	
2021-22 3/13	Draft Governance Self-Assessment and Chair's report	
	<p>A report had been circulated previously providing the Chair's annual report on governance and associated annexes, together with a draft governance self-assessment statement. Governors reflected on the report and whether this fully covered governance activity over the past year.</p> <p>After consideration it was agreed to approve the Chair's annual report and it was agreed that relevant content be used to inform the annual Members report</p>	

	<p>which goes alongside the Financial Statements and to approve the governance self-assessment for inclusion in the overall College self-assessment report.</p> <p>It was noted that an action plan was to be presented to the December meeting, developed from the self-assessment process.</p>	Chair/ Clerk
2021-22 3/14	Code of Good Governance for English Colleges update and associated recommendations	
	<p>A report concerning the revised code and an annotated copy showing the changes made to it from the previous version to which the college subscribed, had been circulated previously.</p> <p>Governors noted in particular the enhanced section on equality, diversity and inclusion and the completely new section on environmental sustainability. Governors acknowledged the importance of setting 'green' targets, that a focus on this should definitely be included in the new Strategic Plan and agreed that the AoC Green Charter should be considered for adoption at a meeting as soon as possible in the new year.</p> <p>After discussion it was agreed that the revised Code of Good Governance for English Colleges should be adopted and that a full review of the Code the Board will subscribe to in the future be carried out once a fully revised and updated Code is proposed by the Association of Colleges. This was expected in 2022. It was further agreed that the Board considers in detail later during the academic year how it will comply or in future explain its stance concerning the new features in the revised Code.</p>	All
2021-22 3/15	Proposal for the operation of Working Groups	
	<p>The Chair commented that when all meetings of the Board were being held in person on campus, it had been advantageous to maximise the use of governors' time by holding working group meetings immediately prior to Board meetings on the same day. However, with the hybrid meeting model now being employed there were advantages in being able to discuss matters a few days in advance of Board meetings through online meetings, timed to make the best use of available information on finance and quality, as well as maximising the available in-person time on campuses to meet staff and students.</p> <p>Governors agreed that the Chair, Principal and Clerk should discuss with the Working Group chairs how best to amend the working group meeting calendar for the remainder of the academic year to address these considerations.</p>	Chair/ Clerk/ P&CEO/ Working Group Chairs
2021-22 2/16	Any other business	
	<p>It was reported that further to discussions earlier in the year concerning equine contracts for riding lessons being dealt with and approved by the Board as subcontracting, external advice from auditors had now confirmed that such arrangements were considered by the Funding Agency as partnerships and not subcontracts.</p>	

2021-22 2/17	Contribution to Outstanding Governance	
	The Chair asked governors to comment to him as appropriate afterwards on how the meeting had operated.	
2021-22 2/18	Date of Next Meeting	
	This was noted as Tuesday 14 December 2021.	
	<i>The meeting was followed by a short confidential meeting for external governors.</i>	