

**Minutes of the Corporation Board meeting held on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2022 at 9.30am in the Burslem Boardroom and via Microsoft Teams**

Present:	Jeremy Cartwright, Chair David Boughey Steve Sawbridge Jo Mountney Sue Blake Tom Nadin Julie Brereton Kevin Hetherington Lisa Capper, Principal/CEO Dave Hopley Lyndsey Cherry		
In Attendance:	Maxine Bagshaw, Clerk to the Corporation Antoinette Lythgoe, Chief Financial Officer Nova Abela, Chief HR Officer Cath Brierley, Deputy Principal		
<b>Min. No.</b>		<b>Action By Whom</b>	<b>Action By When</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>		
	The Chair reminded everyone present to declare any interests that they may have on matters to be discussed. Standing declarations were noted.		
<b>2</b>	<b>WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>		
	Apologies for absence were received from Rob Fisher, David Rogers, Andy McKay, Hannah Molloy, Sibgha Amin and Tom Foster.		
<b>3</b>	<b>MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2022</b>		
	The minutes were reviewed and it was agreed that they were an accurate record of discussions.  AGREED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 15 <sup>th</sup>		



Signed : \_\_\_\_\_ Chair      Date: 14<sup>th</sup> December 2022  
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	<p>July 2022.</p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p>		
<b>4</b>	<b>ACTION PROGRESS REPORT</b>		
	<p>The Board were happy to note the content of the update provided.</p>		
<b>5</b>	<b>STUDENT VOICE</b>		
	<p>The Executive Director of Student Experience introduced this item and a number of matters were considered.</p> <p>1) <u>Talking Heads video – topic is ‘settling in and the effectiveness of induction’</u></p> <p>Comments made by students in the video included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers are really helpful and are pushing me</li> <li>• I am liking my new course</li> <li>• I have had an opportunity to help new students</li> <li>• It was a big jump from Level 2 to Level 3 but it is preparing me for university</li> <li>• Initially a difficult transition but I’m ‘getting in to it’</li> <li>• The College is really welcoming</li> <li>• Staff have supported me to get my adult learning loan. They were really helpful and went the extra mile.</li> <li>• Staff help to ease you in if you are new</li> <li>• A lot of work done to settle people in</li> <li>• Some aspects of my course are quite repetitive but there is also lots to learn</li> <li>• Teachers are amazing</li> <li>• Expectations are high and teachers are pushing us</li> <li>• It is enjoyable but it’s hard. I am in my final year.</li> <li>• This College was my first choice because of the coursework</li> <li>• It is a very good environment</li> <li>• I have needed support with mental health and have found the College to be incredibly supportive</li> <li>• I am involved in the buddy programme which is great</li> <li>• The College is really inclusive</li> </ul>		



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I have been given a lot of opportunities</li> <li>• Clubs are all good</li> <li>• Tutors and peer mentors provide guidance</li> <li>• I appreciate the repetition as it gives focus and matters are re-emphasised</li> <li>• Enrichment is good with enough for everyone</li> <li>• Support is amazing</li> <li>• The College is very diverse</li> <li>• The College community is great for all</li> <li>• Support is there no matter what race, gender, sexuality etc.</li> <li>• Prayer room is open all of the time</li> </ul> <p>What do you enjoy most?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sport and activities</li> <li>• Friends</li> <li>• Staff</li> <li>• Lots of female opportunities for sport</li> </ul> <p>What can improve?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timetables, although I know this is a challenge</li> </ul> <p>The Board were then reminded about the process for creating the Talking Heads piece and key matters highlighted were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marketing department pick out students at random to be videoed and participate</li> <li>• Those who participate will vary in future videos</li> <li>• The focus of this video was all about settling in</li> </ul> <p>The Board then discussed the improvement point made in terms of timetables and it was explained that challenges this year are linked to the increased requirement for guided learning hours, with a jump from 540 to 580. In addition to this, extra time has been provided to support maths and English GCSEs. It was explained that timetables are put together by the MIS team and senior curriculum staff. The extra hours were a challenge to accommodate for maths and English but all staff felt that they were really important. There are 300 additional learners who need to take maths and English resits, which is an exponential rise. It was explained that a timetable gap of between 3 and 4 hours is extreme. Staff advised that, once students have completed the November resits, then it will be possible to relook again at the timetables as there will then be more capacity. The Board were advised that the free time within the timetable is used as an</p>		
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	<p>opportunity, and an example given was for independent study.</p> <p>The Principal/CEO reminded that there are also more students generally on site this year, which has added to the timetabling challenges; however, despite the increased numbers, the College has a calm and orderly environment.</p> <p>Governors all agreed that the videos are really powerful and help Governors to triangulate and re-enforce what is said at more formal meetings. All agreed that it was clear that comments are completely unscripted and often quite 'raw'. A suggestion made and agreed was to include different learners in the next videos, including adults, ESOL, SEN and apprentices. From the feedback provided, Governors all agreed that they were able to see how hard working the staff are and that they want the best for learners. The Principal/CEO confirmed that the College is very proactive and that staff do go above and beyond.</p> <p>One Governor asked what the position is in terms of the staff voice. The Chief HR Officer indicated that there are a number of mechanisms for gathering staff views, some of which are formal and some less formal. An example of the latter are conversations that she has with members of staff in classrooms.</p> <p>In terms of student and staff voice, all agreed that finding the right medium for Governors is what is important and that it should be a two-way process. It was acknowledged that governors have had, and continue to have, a number of opportunities to meet with staff and students.</p> <p>The Board then discussed the content of the next videos and it was agreed that they would have a focus on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Apprentices</li> <li>b) SEN and High Needs</li> </ul> <p>AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.</p> <p>2) <u>Student events and activities for 2022/23</u></p> <p>The Boards attention was drawn to the summary of information provided and key matters highlighted were:</p>		
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a detailed plan in place. Various ways to allow students to get involved</li> <li>• Weekly clubs are listed including 'what's new'. Connexions is all about making friends and relationships. There are also a number of upcycling projects for this year.</li> <li>• A variety of sport and non-sport activities</li> <li>• Volunteering opportunities</li> <li>• Gym is now free for all students</li> </ul> <p>One Governor asked how inclusive the programme is. Staff provided assurance that it is very inclusive and that statistics are monitored including male, female, free school meal, financial assistance, disabilities, learning difficulties etc. Some clubs are purposefully aimed at particular cohorts and examples given were BAME and the 'ability counts forum'. Students input in to the offer to ensure that they are accessible. The Board were advised that the sporting clubs are quite open and inclusive and not all are in competitive leagues. Governors were invited to drop in to any of the sessions and it was agreed that the details of dates and times would be circulated. The Board were reminded that there is a Remembrance service planned for 11<sup>th</sup> November and the invitation for this will be issued shortly. It is also streamed live via YouTube.</p> <p>AGREED: to note the content of the updated provided.</p> <p>3) <u>Student voice timeline for 2022/23</u></p> <p>Governors attention was drawn to all of the opportunities to gather student voice and Governors were invited and welcome to join any listed.</p> <p>AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.</p>	Governance Executive Assistant	Termly
<b>6</b>	<b>PRINCIPAL/CEO'S REPORT</b>		
	<p>The Principal/CEO drew Governors' attention to her detailed report and picked out a number of highlights including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Return to term roadshows went well. There was a smooth return.</li> <li>• Timetables in place and staff are working hard to</li> </ul>		



	<p>ensure there are no issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• College received very good feedback in relation to the fresher's fayre</li> <li>• Exponential rise in the number of students having to take maths and English GCSE resits</li> </ul> <p>In terms of enrolment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stronger for 16-18 and the College will continue to recruit. Position is a bit more sustained than last year</li> <li>- Day 42 is one week away</li> <li>- Peak was 1697, position now is 1598 and allocation is 1600</li> <li>- College is offering a roll on/roll off model for those who are NEET, poor attenders etc. This will be a slightly different programme.</li> <li>- ESOL demand is high and the College has a waiting list. The College needs to ensure that there is adequate staffing in place.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial pressures remain. Energy deal is being monitored. Budget is fixed and therefore costs will have to be carefully managed whilst responding to demand.</li> <li>• Quality assurance work continues. All quality assurance strategies and policies have been reviewed. Ofsted Board is working well.</li> <li>• Safeguarding platinum mark obtained which really allows the College to showcase its activities</li> <li>• Staff survey results have been shared widely and a small task group established to take forward actions required</li> <li>• Staff continue to work hard with all stakeholders</li> <li>• Bank covenants have been renegotiated</li> <li>• 2022/23 is a transition year and will allow the College to build growth in to plans.</li> <li>• Staff are about to embark upon 2023/24 curriculum planning</li> <li>• In relation to the results from the summer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A positive set</li> <li>- College has held its own</li> <li>- GCSE English outcomes have bucked the national trend</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Maths has held its place</li> <li>- Some issues at entry level</li> <li>- Some issues at Level 3</li> <li>- Apprenticeship data is skewed by legacy issues</li> <li>• College secured SDF funding to purchase an electric vehicle and digital/IA equipment. This is a great collaborative project.</li> <li>• Funding obtained from the Savoy Trust to support catering development</li> <li>• Free school proposed in the City with a focus on digital skills. In relation to this, the College is speaking to the local authority and the Sixth Form supportively and Stoke on Trent College is now confirmed as a partner; there is a partnership agreement in place. If the bid is successful, then the aim is to make the most of this as an opportunity.</li> <li>• In relation to careers, the College is piloting programmes to support schools in terms of meeting the 'Six encounters' requirement</li> <li>• The College continues with the tuition catch up activities</li> <li>• High level skills is an important development for the College</li> <li>• Staff are preparing for three T Levels which will be provided next September. It will be small numbers to start with.</li> <li>• The College was a key part of the Opportunity Area programme which has now been replaced by the Education Challenge Board. It is important that there is an FE voice on this Board and not just schools.</li> <li>• The Principal/CEO was provided with an opportunity to be a key note speaker, which was a great opportunity to really highlight the skills agenda.</li> <li>• The Goods Yard development was an opportunity again to highlight the training that the College can offer</li> </ul> <p>The Boards attention was then drawn to the information provided on policy landscape and next steps which they were happy to note. Governors acknowledged that it was really clear to see how much was going on and that this was a credit to the staff teams involved.</p>		
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	<p>A question and challenge from the Board was that, going forward, they would like a better understanding of the Free School application and particularly risks and opportunities. The Principal/CEO explained that it does have a long lead in time and it is not expected that things will happen quickly. A challenge from the Board was that this development should not be about competition and that it is important that there is a whole City approach.</p> <p>AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.</p>		
<b>7</b>	<b>CHAIRS REPORT – TRANSFORMATION, FINANCE &amp; RESOURCE COMMITTEE</b>		
	<p>The Committee Chair provided an update on the content of the meeting which took place on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2022 and key matters highlighted were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amazing to see the breadth of challenges and opportunities that are reported to the Committee</li> <li>• A number of legislative reports were received and examples given were HR and Health and Safety. Governors recognise the amount of time that goes in to preparing these.</li> <li>• Renegotiation of the bank covenants is a real positive</li> <li>• Significant amount of work is being done to address historic issues regarding the Apprenticeship provision and Governors appreciate that improvements have been made but are not yet showing in the data, which is frustrating for staff.</li> <li>• Annual Health and Safety report provided was comprehensive</li> <li>• New proposals regarding the format of the Scheme of Delegation were considered and the Committee liked the clarity and simplicity of the grid format proposed.</li> <li>• There are two matters requiring Board approval which are:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Updated Health and Safety Policy – with no significant changes proposed</li> <li>2) Committee Terms of Reference to continue in to 2022/23 unchanged.</li> </ol> </li> </ul>		



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	<p>AGREED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) To note the content of the update provided</li> <li>b) Note the reports considered in detail by the Committee</li> <li>c) Approve the updated Health and Safety Policy as presented</li> <li>d) Approve continued use of the Transformation, Finance and Resources Committee Terms of Reference unchanged in to 2022/23.</li> </ul>		
<b>8</b>	<b>CHAIRS REPORT – CURRICULUM, QUALITY &amp; STANDARDS COMMITTEE</b>		
	<p>The Committee Chair advised that both the Curriculum, Quality and Standards Committee and the Apprenticeship Task and Finish Group had met yesterday and key matters highlighted were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality strategy end of year review of effectiveness was a very valuable report. This feeds in to the SAR and QIP process.</li> <li>• SAR includes a definitive statement on how the College performed in 2021/22. It will be validated in November and presented for approval by the Board in December.</li> <li>• Committee considered in detail a number of policies and a framework. These ensure clarity and the policy specifically sets out the overall commitment expected from staff.</li> <li>• Information circulated in advance of the meeting includes at 8.2 a refreshed Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Observations procedure.</li> <li>• Documents put forward for Board approval include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Quality Strategy</li> <li>2) Quality Policy</li> <li>3) Quality framework</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>The Board were happy to approve as presented.</p> <p>AGREED: to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Note the content of the update provided</li> <li>b) Note the content of the reports considered in detail by the Committee.</li> <li>c) Approve the Quality Strategy as presented</li> <li>d) Approve the Quality Policy as presented</li> </ul>		



	<p>e) Approve the Quality Framework as presented</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Committee had an opportunity to review the first draft of a 'skills position' paper. This will be a key document and is really important. It brings together an awful lot of activity. All agreed that it was important for all Governors to be invited to give feedback as it develops over time.</li> <li>• Data dashboard provided was really helpful</li> <li>• In terms of Apprenticeships, there is a lot of hard work taking place</li> <li>• Safeguarding annual report was considered with a really strong position reported, which is underpinned by the audit undertaken by Insight.</li> </ul> <p>(Jo Mountney left the meeting at 12.35pm)</p> <p>In discussion, it was explained that the LSIPs is an emerging piece of work and therefore it is not possible yet to take it as definitive and that what is important is for the College to try and influence where appropriate.</p> <p>The Principal/CEO indicated that staff teams have been working really hard together on the updated suite of quality documents and she asked that her appreciation be recorded.</p>		
<b>9</b>	<b>CORPORATE RISKS 2022/23</b>		
	<p>The Chief Financial Officer drew Governors' attention to the report provided and explained that things have changed since July 2022 and that the report highlights where the senior team believe risks have changed. Key matters highlighted were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic risk 14 - will now more explicitly divide the risks to ensure that they are reported to each of the Committees</li> <li>• Ofsted risk remains unchanged</li> <li>• In terms of Apprenticeships, the risk has increased slightly. This is more about the impact on the financial position i.e. the impact of cleansing data before RO14. There is a risk that a reduction in income will impact on the financial health calculation as the College is only just sitting within the 'good' band.</li> <li>• Risk 3 has increased for the same reason</li> </ul>		



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risks in relation to breaching bank covenants has decreased slightly</li> <li>• In relation to HR, there are no changes</li> <li>• Estates risks are unchanged; however, risk has increased now that the Cauldon project has started</li> <li>• No change to reputational risks</li> <li>• Governance risks are slightly increased given the planned change to the Clerk to the Corporation role</li> <li>• Slight increase in Covid risks given an increasing number of cases</li> </ul> <p>It was confirmed that the full risk register would be presented to the December meeting following detailed review by Audit Committee in the next cycle of meetings.</p> <p>A challenge from one member of the Board was whether or not it is possible to undertake a 'blue sky exercise' as the risks reported appear to be quite siloed. They suggested that it is important to look at what is on the horizon and examples given were the economic climate and projects. All acknowledged that these are a good reflection of where the College is now but that there is a need to look to the medium and longer term. A challenge was to consider wider policy changes and an example given was the potential ONS reclassification of colleges. In addition, there are risks associated with not taking opportunities. A challenge from the Board was to look at the risk appetite of each and then better articulate the interdependencies.</p> <p>AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.</p>	Chief Financial Officer	December 2022
<b>10</b>	<b>GOVERNANCE</b>		
	<p>The Clerk to the Corporation introduced this item and indicated that there were a number of matters to consider, including:</p> <p>1) <u>Recruitment of the second Student Governor</u></p> <p>The Board were asked to note the timeline for recruitment and interviews. It was agreed to provide delegated authority to the Chair to make an appointment on the recommendation of the interview panel.</p>		



	<p>2) <u>Ratification of written resolutions</u></p> <p>The Board were advised that, since the last meeting, there have been two requests for Board approval via written email resolutions. The first was on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2022 and related to capital projects and T Level bid submission. The second was on the 20<sup>th</sup> September 2022 and related to the new/updated Safeguarding Policy and Procedure. In both instances sufficient responses were received to approve and the Board is now formally asked to ratify the approvals given.</p> <p>3) Talking heads topics for future board meetings</p> <p>Options were discussed and matters to cover included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching and Learning</li> <li>• Maths and English</li> <li>• Early next steps</li> <li>• Preparation for next steps</li> <li>• Careers</li> <li>• What is life like through an apprentices eyes. What are their experience. Will they say the same thing as classroom based learners.</li> </ul> <p>AGREED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) To note the content of the update provided</li> <li>b) Delegate authority to the Chair to approve the appointment of the second Student Governor following planned interviews</li> <li>c) Formally ratify the written resolutions requested and made on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2022 and 20<sup>th</sup> September 2022 by email.</li> </ol>		
<b>11</b>	<b>AGREED ACTIONS FROM THE MEETING</b>		
	<p>These were summarised as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talking heads topics agreed for future meetings include Apprenticeship provision and SEN and high needs</li> <li>• Skills position statement – Governors to be provided with an opportunity to give feedback</li> <li>• Governors to be invited to drop in to enrichment activities</li> <li>• Governors to identify when they would like to join learner voice events</li> </ul>		



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Risk appetite review proposal to be provided i.e. the timeline.</li> </ul>		
<b>12</b>	<b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b>		
	There were no items of additional business.		
<b>13</b>	<b>DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING</b>		
	This was confirmed as Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup> December 2022 at 9.30am		



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