

**Minutes of the Corporation meeting held on  
Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 9.30am  
Burslem Boardroom and via Microsoft Teams**

Present:	Jeremy Cartwright, Chair	Remote
	Steve Sawbridge	In person
	Sue Blake	In person
	David Boughey, Vice Chair	In person
	David Rogers	In person
	Hannah Molloy	Remote
	Rob Fisher	Remote
	Tom Nadin	Remote
	Kevin Hetherington	In person
	Sally Garratt	Remote
	Lisa Capper, Principal/CEO	In person
	Lyndsey Cherry, Staff Governor	In person
	Dave Hopley, Staff Governor	In person
In Attendance:	Cath Brierley, Deputy Principal	In person
	Antoinette Lythgoe, Chief Financial Officer	In person
	Nova Abela, Chief HR Officer	Remote
	Emma Brannen, Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality	In person
	Claire Williams, Director of Marketing	In person
	Jules Bridges, Clerk to the Corporation	In person

<b>No.</b>		<b>Action</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Declaration of Interests</b> The Chair reminded everyone present to declare any interests that they may have on agenda items to be discussed. No specific declarations, other than for paid positions, were made and standing declarations were noted.	
<b>2</b>	<b>Welcome, introductions and apologies for absence</b> Apologies for absence were received from Julie Brereton, Jo Mountney, Sibgha Amin, Sidra Rashid-Bhatti, Tom Foster, and Harry Sajad.	
<b>3</b>	<b>Minutes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2023</b> The minutes of the meeting were <b>approved</b> as an accurate record.	
<b>4</b>	<b>Governor Strategy Day notes 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023</b> The notes of the Strategy days were <b>agreed</b> as an accurate record.	
	S Garratt and T Nadin joined the meeting at 9.33am	
<b>5</b>	<b>Extraordinary Corporation Board Minutes 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023</b> The minutes of the meeting were <b>approved</b> as an accurate record.	
<b>6</b>	<b>Action Progress Report</b> The actions arising from the previous meeting were summarised in the progress report and all actions reported had either been resolved or, where appropriate, an update had been provided on progress elsewhere on the agenda.  The Corporation was satisfied that all actions had been suitably resolved and could be removed from the report.	
<b>7</b>	<b>Student Voice</b> <b>Talking Heads Video – Next Steps and Career Goals</b>	

Signed :  \_\_\_\_\_ Chair  
Corporation Board minutes 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023

Date: 13<sup>th</sup> July 2023

Governors had viewed the video prior to the meeting. It was noted that the topic for the next video would be progression. The Chair asked if the issue that the student raised about needing support on placement had been dealt with. It was confirmed that this has been fed back to the work experience team and this was the reason why the questions to students were shaped around being out on work experience, and their experience of using the 'Connect' app.

Governors were interested to know if it was difficult to get students to take part in the videos. The Assistant Principal Student Experience confirmed that there are no issues getting participation, the biggest challenge is commitment to the Student Governor role as finding time with their studies is difficult and participating at a strategic level. This is on the work plan for the Clerk to develop the role and the management of Student Governors, finding easier ways for them to contribute and reaching out to larger cohorts perhaps attracting adult learners and/or apprentices.

### ***Student Events and Activities***

Enrichment activities continue on a weekly basis with the focus this week on equality and diversity. Governors have attended the cultural day and are good supporters at such events.

### ***Themes arising from Learner Voice Conference/Learner Representative meetings***

There is one more Learner Voice Conference this academic year (25<sup>th</sup> May 2023) and the student elections are running next week also. There are 20 students signed up for positions; President, Vice President Cauldon and Burslem, and Executive Officers who run the Student Union.

The Challenge Liverpool project has been delivered with Challenge Wales and Challenge London yet to run. There are 22 students signed up for Challenge South Africa. The programme starts in May with students visiting South Africa in February 2024.

As mentioned, the focus for the next academic year will be to ensure that we get the representation right for Student Governors on the Board.

## **8 Principal/CEO's Report**

The Principal/CEO reported that the College continues to move forward on a positive trajectory. Externally, the College is still benefitting from the Ofsted Good and the confidence, engagement and desire to do better is really coming through. The national QAR data 2021/22 shows a good ranking for the College against national rates and league tables show Stoke on Trent College just behind Newcastle and Stafford College Group for study programmes and a similar level for adult learning in the area. Instead of being bottom of these tables behind all of the colleges in Staffordshire, and neighbouring areas such as Trafford, Cheshire, Burton, and Derbyshire, the College is now ranking second and third for adult and study programmes. This has been driven by high rates and GCSEs with high numbers that influence achievement data on study programmes and the efforts put in and strategies deployed to push high grades have really paid off. The ranking and position of the College is an important message to get out and this is really fuelling engagement across the College.

The College had a positive 'Annual Conversation' with the ESFA and FE Commissioner's office. The formal letter is yet to be received but Governors had received the presentation pack that showed the depth of scrutiny undertaken and,



Signed : \_\_\_\_\_ Chair  
Corporation Board minutes 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023

Date: 13<sup>th</sup> July 2023

in summary, the ESFA were very positive about the progress made and one of the achievements in closing the gap between maths and English attendance and vocational attendance for 16-18s means that the College is now on the national register for good practice of the FE Commissioner. On the back of this, it was reported that the College will take up the free support offered from the FE Commissioner around curriculum, efficiencies and planning. This will start in the autumn and will provide the College with the capacity to understand and plan for the qualification reforms, T Levels, the shift with the LSIP and changes in adult funding and enable an in depth look at the implication of these.

Work continues with the Chamber to develop the LSIP and the draft was released earlier this week to partners for feedback. This is to be shared with Governors after the meeting as this will help inform the final draft of the Skills Statement. Feedback will be provided to the Chamber to ensure that there is a rounded view of the skills issues and the College in tandem has built its curriculum plan, shaping, responding to, and honing in on the skills areas.

Clerk

Good progress has been made developing the new strategic plan. The set of values have been refreshed and are out for consultation with staff and learners and these will be shared with Governors after the meeting. The next phase is to develop a 'Strategy on a page' that will set out the objectives and core aims to be shared with stakeholders and key partners for feedback in preparation of sharing the first draft with Governors at the Corporation meeting to be held in July 2023.

Clerk

In terms of performance, the College is still under financial pressure and recovery; however, Apprenticeship income is just £40K off target and nearly £300K ahead of target on adults compared to the same point last year. The 97% target for adult is still achievable but is still a risk as income is currently at 88% but, if subcontractors deliver as predicted (at 90%), by the end of July, the target of 97% can be achieved.

The capital transformation projects are going ahead as planned. The planning application for Cauldon works are due to be submitted soon and a final design, within the budget envelope for Burslem, is now finalised. The T Level Construction project is on track to complete in September 2023 and the Savoy Trust works completed in April 2023, so the patisserie kitchen is now up and running.

The Principal/CEO highlighted stakeholder and partner activities, and awards:

- Achieved two AoC awards. One in equality and diversity in Sports, the other in volunteering in Sport
- Multicultural day (student led event) this week and Stoke City Football Club held a multicultural photographic exhibition
- Regular Radio Stoke slot and column in the Sentinel
- Launch of Stoke by Numbers this week – funded Multiply contract and the College won the marketing contract with the official launch of Stoke by Numbers as part of the national numeracy day
- DWP hosted event has enabled the College to refresh its work with job centre plus across Stoke and the surrounding areas
- The College is working closely with Keele University to explore progression pathways into higher learning that Staffordshire don't do and what they can offer the College with teaching and learning
- YMCA community lunch cooked by Level 3 learners was a great event



Signed : \_\_\_\_\_ Chair  
Corporation Board minutes 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023

Date: 13<sup>th</sup> July 2023

The focus now is on exams and assessment, and closing down on learning aims. There are maths and Biology GCSE exams this week and then attention is turned to preparing for the next academic year.

A Governor asked if the QAR data and the position of the College was a surprise. The Principal/CEO commented that the College keeps a close eye on the data dashboard but, because of COVID and data not being published and national rates moving around as a consequence, there hasn't been visibility until now, so whilst there was confidence in the performance of the College, there were no comparisons that could be drawn against other providers. The other factor to bear in mind is that Stoke on Trent College starting points are so much lower, with far greater numbers of learners from deprived postcode areas than all the other FE college providers in the area combined and differences in the curriculum offer means that comparisons are not necessarily like for like but what it does demonstrate is that the quality of teaching and learning at the College is of a really high standard.

Finally, it was noted that the College has submitted five bids to the Stoke-on-Trent £9m UK shared Prosperity Fund under three themes; Community and Place, Local Business Support, and Employment and Skills. Outcomes will not be announced for some time but Governors will be informed once known.

C Williams joined the meeting at 10.05am

## **9 Marketing Strategy**

The Director of Marketing was appointed in October 2022 and the first piece of work was to develop a Marketing Strategy. This now aligns with the new strategic plan for the College, building on the Ofsted Good success and being relentless in the drive to deliver an inspirational technical education experience.

In summary, the strategy will:

- Promote the role of the College
- Grow market share
- Showcase the quality of the College and the offer to employers
- Provide clarity on what we do; the largest provider of adult education and third largest provider for study programmes locally
- Our role in the community – our place as a key partner

The presentation delivered to Governors touched on the key findings from previous research and the unique selling points (USP) that will shape consistent messages. The College will showcase its achievements and celebrate the high-profile visits, build on its stakeholder partnerships and place making campaigns, raise its profile, participate in national FE campaigns and publicise its open events, and community open days etc.

The Chair noted that the Marketing team is small with big ambitions, so would it be agile enough to tap into areas of marketing or a marketing vehicle if there was a lack of resource or funding that would make a difference. The Director of Marketing commented that there is the right skillset in the team but, in an ideal world, extra resource is always welcome but there is capacity to fulfil the strategy and grow resource over time.

Governors said that they were impressed with the Strategy, partnership messages were strong, College values emphasised and this gave the College credibility. A Governor questioned what the increased social media presence impact is



Signed : \_\_\_\_\_ Chair  
Corporation Board minutes 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023

Date: 13<sup>th</sup> July 2023

compared to last year, SEO and number of approaches, opinion pieces, improved analytics and how this translates into learner numbers. It was acknowledged that there is more to do on the College website but the KPIs build in the statistics of analytics, monitoring visitor activity, length of sessions, number of clicks, bounce back etc. Social media has increased and continues to increase on a month-by-month basis and there are more platforms that can be utilised (e.g. Tic Toc). Another Governor commented that there were no KPIs against success measures but the Director of Marketing provided assurance that, once the College profile has increased, this will have the knock-on-effect on the market share. We need to change perception and increase awareness of the College offer and this will convert into increased student numbers and increased market share. The College is attracting more media coverage and applications are up by over 60% but it's not known how many of these will convert into enrolments in September and this will be the test.

A Governor commented that student reviews are a powerful influence to prospective students as young people listen and make choices and decisions based upon the views and experiences of others. It was pleasing to see that the learner voice was a strong influencer in this new Marketing Strategy. Likewise, another Governor asked if the College was seeing more connections and enthusiasm from employers and the Director of Marketing mentioned the increased sign-up for the College stakeholder newsletter, and increased responses to event invitations and participation. All events are publicised on social media and advantage taken to tag companies and connections to build relationships and interest in the work and achievements of the College.

In summary, a Governor said that the new Strategy was 'very much of its time'. In the past, the College had been introspective, focusing its attention on sorting out the internal issues but there was confidence now and evidence that the focus is very much external and collaborative in approach.

C Williams left the meeting at 10.45am

## **10 Accountability Statement and Draft Skills Duty**

### *Accountability Statement*

The Government published guidance in December 2022, setting out a requirement for colleges to develop and publish an Accountability Statement for 2023/24 by the 31<sup>st</sup> May 2023, which should be approved by the Corporation. Governors have been aware of the requirement and contributed to shaping the statement at various points earlier in the year, including the away day.

In addition to the approval and submission of the Accountability Statement, there is also a public duty placed upon Governors to publish a Skills Statement which explains how well the education and training of the College meets local needs. Both the Accountability Statement and the Skills Statement are linked to the LSIP. The Accountability Statement has a deadline submission date of the 31<sup>st</sup> May 2023, whereas the Skills Statement can be published (on the College website) at some point thereafter.

The Accountability Statement is part 2 of the College's funding agreement for the 2023/24 academic year. The statement has to set out a small number of objectives, linked to funding, that demonstrate the changes that the College is going through and the priorities that the College has in order to deliver the skills needs for the local area and the College. The Accountability Statement for the College has been shaped around six objectives that the College plans to do;



Signed : \_\_\_\_\_ Chair  
Corporation Board minutes 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023

Date: 13<sup>th</sup> July 2023

- Growing four Growth Hubs (married to the LSIP); Engineering, Health and Social Care, Digital and Construction
- Apprenticeship starts; growing the provision to meet local skills needs
- Adult plan – meeting the needs of labour market inactivity; reskilling and upskilling, higher level skills for adults
- Roll out of T Levels in this academic year to identify the T Level offer for September and the September thereafter
- Capital Transformation Projects, modernising and industry focussed
- Reflects on the inclusion agenda focusing on the emerging skills priorities and the pipeline of Level 1 and Level 2; NEET and Princes Trust and how we can further engage

The statement reflects the LSIP draft, but also responds to the Staffordshire Economic and Skills Plan, and the Stoke-on-Trent Powering Up prospectus.

Governors were invited to comment on the statement and a Governor asked 'what will the College be accountable for and how will the College be held accountable for it? Is the statement too detailed and should it be higher level and more strategic?'. It was acknowledged that the guidance asked for statements to include measurable targets but it was accepted that the level of detail will be reviewed and, potentially, the column on performance targets removed.

Principal  
/ CEO

It was further asked if the targets set by the PMO needed to be included in the statement but, as these are linked to the RF Deal and are not aligned to our delivery aspirations, it was agreed that these were not appropriate to include.

In summary, it was agreed that the statement will be refined to minimise the risk in the performance targets, de-risk as much as possible, provide less detail, and keep it higher level. The Corporation therefore **approved** the statement, in principle, in the knowledge that the final version would follow by email for sign off before the submission deadline.

It was noted that the Chamber have asked colleges to share their draft Accountability Statements to ensure that these reflect the skills priorities that colleges have identified so that the two sit alongside each other. Feedback on the first draft has been received and a meeting with colleges is planned to share and collect the feedback from partners and stakeholders.

As a general comment, a Governor mentioned that there is absolutely the need for visibility of digital and enhancing this in the development of the statement is supported and that this is not just about the need of today but is also the needs up to 2030 and digital is one of the key areas that addresses skills for the future.

The Principal/CEO mentioned that there is a suggestion that Chairs of neighbouring colleges gather to discuss the statement and skills duty and details about this coming together will be advised once arranged.

#### *Skills Duty*

The document shared with Governors explains (for publication on the College website) how the College plans its curriculum offer, how it responds to national and local/regional priorities, how the College understands the skills needs through data analysis, working with a range of different data sets, working with the LEP, the Chamber, local authorities, employer panels, learner voice etc. How the



Signed : \_\_\_\_\_ Chair  
Corporation Board minutes 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023

Date: 13<sup>th</sup> July 2023

College includes its disadvantaged communities, and states the actions the College is taking to meet the local skills needs.

The Chair commented that, as this is a public document, it would be useful to align it with all other public messages/statements. It was agreed that this will be refreshed; jargon removed, acronyms explained, shorter, higher level, use of hyperlinks, use of headings, to make it a more accessible document for a public audience. It was agreed that a refreshed version would follow by email for sign off by Governors before website publication and therefore this was **approved** in principle.

Principal  
/ CEO

It was noted that a Governors Skills and Apprenticeships Task and Finish Group is to be established to focus on how well the College is meeting the skills needs and how curriculum planning is impacting through the year and how the College is shaping its Apprenticeship Strategy and employer engagement to meet local skills needs.

#### **11 5 Pillar Update and Performance Measures/KPIs**

It was noted that the framework measures against the current strategic plan were included in the update report and were last reported to the Transformation, Finance and Resources Committee. The report was taken as read.

Item 13 of the agenda preceded item 12

#### **12 QIP 2022/2023**

E Brannen joined the meeting at 11.30am

The report received focusses on term two updates and covers the ten main priorities of the self-assessment report and outcomes of the Ofsted inspection.

It was noted that success measures are RAG rated and, in term two, all of those that were previously rated Red in term one are now amber and furthermore there are thirteen in the green category. Since writing the report, there has been significant progress made against the Apprenticeship success measures, so many of those will turn green. Particular strengths of the QIP lie with those associated with curriculum planning and meeting skills needs. Retention data is holding, although notably there are some slight dips but continued adult enrolments are expected to positively impact retention at the year-end. Lots of work continues to monitor and support at risk learners through predicted final grade monitoring, risk indicator updates and meetings with heads of departments to look at the 'at risk' areas and the actions taken to reduce and minimise the risk and how this will impact learner outcomes.

In summary:

- There are 21 amber RAG rated success measures
- The attendance gap between vocational and maths and English is almost zero now and has been recognised as best practice with the ESFA. The College will be entered onto the ESFA register of best practice.
- As reported, Apprenticeship achievement is at 55%
- The new Head of Apprenticeships is forging forward on quality monitoring, carrying out on-site visits, and overall quality of teaching, learning and assessments in Apprenticeships is improving
- Progress to finalise the mock maths and English grades is underway, combining those with the resit grades from November to look at those with high grades.



Signed : \_\_\_\_\_ Chair  
Corporation Board minutes 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023

Date: 13<sup>th</sup> July 2023

At the moment this is at c.30% but this doesn't include those who only partially sat the completed mark so this is not the full picture but none-the-less is promising

- PetXI will be in College next week to do focussed sessions on those learners who are close to grade 4 and can increase their grade, funded through the tuition fund.
- Underperforming classes are being closely monitored and courses where attendance has dropped and therefore risk increased include Hair and Beauty, Plumbing, and Gas
- Working with at risk courses in terms of employer engagement is positive in Childcare and in Plumbing and work continues in Electrical, Engineering, and IT forging links with key local employers
- There are no concerns with High Needs learners and learners are progressing into positive destinations
- There is particular focus with 16-18s, Levels 2 and 3 at risk areas, looking at attendance, recalls for exams, or retention
- Adult entry level achievement is strong
- Currently there are no significant gaps in data for looked after learners

E Brannen left the meeting at 11.42am

### **13 Performance Update – Data Dashboard Report**

The Deputy Principal reported against the R08 outturn (April 2023). Headlines to note were:

- Attendance is holding steady across the piste
- Vocational and GCSE maths and English attendance is at 83% right across the board for study programme learners
- 16-18 retention is at 91% which is close to KPI (national average 90%)
- Foundation learners' retention is at 98%
- 19+ attendance is at 95% (3.5% above national average) with no gender or ethnicity issues
- High needs has grown to 135 learners in the year
- Care leavers retention is at 89%
- 16-18 attendance is at 83% (against KPI 89%)
- 19+ attendance is at 85%
- Overall attendance is good and close monitoring on retention continues to ensure learners stay on programme

The Apprenticeships Accountability Framework dashboard has been updated with the 2022/23 R08 ILR data return which shows just one red indicator against End Point Assessments (flagged at 49) because the College delivers to Electrical and Plumbing standards, apprentices can only be registered for their EPA once they reach the gateway, so the College will always trigger this indicator on the dashboard.

Apprenticeship highlights reported:

- The number of OOFs are down from last year; 165 down to 86 with 101 completed
- Achievement is at 55% from 53% (KPI met). Last year the outturn was 36.6% at the end of the year (an improvement of 17% on last year)
- Best case is 72.2% and there are 18 learners ready for gateway.
- Less withdrawals, more achievement
- There is confidence in the final grades (predicted achievement)

It was noted that the College's work to improve the Apprenticeship provision is a



Signed : \_\_\_\_\_ Chair  
Corporation Board minutes 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023

Date: 13<sup>th</sup> July 2023



real success story with the ESFA. The Annual Strategic Conversation commended the cleaning up work with OOFs and withdrawals, and the focus on achievement and tripartite arrangements with employers.

#### **14 Management Accounts – March 2023**

The Chief Financial Officer reported that a prudent view has been taken in the adult education income line at 94%. The April position assumes 95% and there is confidence that the allocation (97%) can be achieved. The cash position remains strong, noting that this includes two capital grants for energy efficiency and ONS reclassification. Pay and non-pay lines remain under control, although the report (page 8) does show two amber rates on KPIs due to prudent income assumptions and operating position.

The PMO targets are the minimum targets and, likewise, the RF Deal KPIs are set deliberately low for monitoring purposes in order to minimise the risk of repayment of the performance related element of the RF Deal. It was noted that the targets were agreed by the Corporation and included in the budget and forecast last year. The curriculum targets have been finalised, particularly noting that the Apprenticeship achievement rate has been kept low to de-risk against potentially not achieving. Agreement has also been reached to exclude monitoring of staff and estates utilisation as these will fluctuate as capital build projects progress. Capital expenditure levels have been agreed before cash sweep kicks in and cash balances agreed at a relatively high level.

#### **15 Risk Management Policy**

The refreshed Risk Management Policy has been reviewed by the Audit Committee. Work continues on the presentation of the Corporate Risk Register, Board Assurance Framework, and heat map that will be considered by the Committee and then shared with the Corporation at the meeting to be held in July 2023. The Corporation considered and **approved** the Risk Management Policy presented.

#### **16 Budget Timetable and Assumptions**

The budget assumptions were detailed in the report noting that these are the broad parameters used to build the budget for 2023/24 academic year. The budget and three-year financial forecast are to be presented to the Corporation at the meeting to be held in July 2023.

#### **17 Chair's Reports Audit Committee**

The Chair of the Committee reported that the Committee had looked at risk and risk management and the continuing development of the way that the College monitors risk, making living documents that are more widely accessible. Attention has been given to the internal audit programme and how this is progressing. Audit work is on target and good assurance has been given on the continued improvement of the Apprenticeship provision.

*Confidential item under Instrument 17.2(d)*

Every three years, the College's contract with external auditors is reviewed. While there was no concern with the incumbent auditors (RSM), the market was tested and, while RSM are a 'safe bet', their fees are higher than the other two shortlisted firms. Hacker Young were not overly impressive in presentation but Beever and Struthers evidenced specialism in education, comprehensive and simple explanation of funding streams/rules, and willingness to spend time with



Signed : \_\_\_\_\_ Chair  
Corporation Board minutes 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023

Date: 13<sup>th</sup> July 2023

Governors and the Committee, and on price were particularly impressive. The Corporation therefore was asked to consider the recommendation to appoint Beever and Struthers as external auditors. The Chair questioned if the prices quoted were fixed and the Chair of the Audit Committee confirmed that, what was quoted, is what would be charged. In addition, a Governor asked if there was concern if a smaller firm had the capacity to deliver and the Chair of the Committee confirmed that the education arm of Beever and Struthers is just as big as RSM and therefore there was assurance that resource and capacity was adequate. The Corporation **approved** the appointment of Beever and Struthers as external auditors for a period of three years from 2022/23 to 2025/26 inclusive with the option to extend for a further 2 years to 2027/28.

The Principal/CEO assured the Corporation that the work on the Student Journey to Enrolment actions noted as outstanding in the minutes of the 9<sup>th</sup> March 2023 have since been shared with the Committee and therefore the action closed down and can be updated as completed in the minutes.

Clerk

### ***Transformation, Finance and Resources Committee***

The Chair of the Committee commented that, since the last meeting of the Committee, the College has achieved the ISO45001 Health and Safety re-accreditation. The Committee received a good presentation on the Digital Strategy and the enormity of the challenge, noting that the Board will need to invest continually and, in terms of affordability, Governors will need to be mindful of this.

### ***Curriculum, Quality and Standards Committee***

The Chair of the Committee commented that the coming focus for the Committee will be on the evaluation of the College's approach to managing and improving quality, looking at start of year arrangements, the timescale for the SAR process, maths and English strategy, and review of the EDI policy. The Chair of the Committee suggested that there is a risk around the Level 3 reform, change of Level 3 qualifications and how the College will move to into this space from Level 2. Linked to this is the rollout out of T Levels from September and beyond and it was suggested that this needs to be kept in focus and an entry on the Corporate Risk Register.

CFO

Other focus areas for the committee include:

- Apprenticeship delivery
- HE and Higher Technical Qualifications, working with HE partners
- Aligning provision with the LSIP, responding to demand but also including other things that learners achieve; soft skills and employability
- Growth of the curriculum and resulting growth of income

### ***Capital Projects Committee***

It was noted that there was no further update since the presentation delivered at the recent away day.

## **18 EBS (Stoke) Ltd Board Minutes 28<sup>th</sup> March 2023**

The minutes of the meeting were **noted** by the Board. It was noted that the subsidiary exists for the sole purpose of employing service staff. This is under review, together with legislative updates in relation to a potential issue regarding holiday entitlement for part-time and irregular hour workers.

## **19 Code of Good Governance**

The previous version of the Code adopted by the College on the 27<sup>th</sup> November



Signed : \_\_\_\_\_ Chair  
Corporation Board minutes 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023

Date: 13<sup>th</sup> July 2023

2015 has now ceased to exist. The completed assessment and action plan evidences how the College (by way of 'comply or explain') has reported against the revised Code in the 2022/23 academic year.

The revised Code (September 2021) will be somewhat short lived given that the Code in its current form has been subject to significant review, now that the Skills and Post-16 Education Bill have been implemented. We await a more accessible and streamlined Governance Code for the FE sector, which maybe some time soon.

It was noted that the three amber areas of the assessment against the Code show partial compliance but relate to the same action, which is to develop a Scheme of Delegation and Matters Reserved and these are currently in draft form and are in the final scrutiny stage before being shared with the Corporation in July 2023.

Clerk

A Governor who had been involved in the working group of the new Code concurred that the Code had been subject to the widespread criticism for being too big, and too onerous. The new Code, after significant review, has been aligned to Charity Code, reducing down to six very precise principles supported by a rationalised process. The 'tick box' assessment has been removed and details provided in the Code with the assurance documents that Corporation's might look to show that there is compliance with the Code. Consultation ended in April 2023 and the intention is that the National Governors' Council will sign this off in June for adoption of the Code in July 2023. The Corporation was content to **approve** the revised Code in the knowledge that the new Code is anticipated soon.

## 20 **Governor Link Feedback**

The Chair invited those who had Governor Link visits to report back to the Corporation. Visits included:

- Attending the Learner Voice event which was planned for the equality and diversity events that are happening across College this week.
- Governors had a visit around the capital build sites which was useful to see where capital spend is planned; growth hubs
- Attendance at the AoC Safeguarding group focussing on governance and safeguarding, accountability agreements, and diversity and skills of the Board mirroring the intent of the curriculum and how students are involved at Board level. In addition, there was emphasis placed on clear lines and understanding of what happens in College and out of College and what the role is from a safeguarding perspective and where the boundaries are. Finally, there were discussions about safeguarding arrangements for Apprenticeships and how these naturally translate into our work and practice with employers.

## 21 **Review of meeting**

Despite some technology issues, the meeting was well received by Governors.

## 22 **Any other items of urgent business**

The draft calendar of 2023/24 Governors' meetings will be shared with Chairs prior to wider circulation. Governors were encouraged to engage in the process and ensure scheduled dates go into diaries.

All

A proposal to purchase the renewal of Pro-Suite was presented to the Board. In accordance with our Financial Regulations, the level of spend requires the approval of the Corporation. The proposal is to purchase at a cost of £224K. It was noted that the increase is 8.5%. The cost is in budget and, after due consideration, the

Signed : \_\_\_\_\_ Chair  
Corporation Board minutes 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023

Date: 13<sup>th</sup> July 2023

Board **approved** the purchase.

The Principal/CEO advised that we are working with Peridot Partners to recruit new Governors to join the Corporation. The process should conclude in time to recommend an appointment to the July meeting of the Board. The search is seeking financial skills to join the Board.

**Date and time of next meeting**

Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2023 at 9.30am

The meeting ended at 12.20pm



Signed : \_\_\_\_\_ Chair  
Corporation Board minutes 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023

Date: 13<sup>th</sup> July 2023