

# LEEDS COLLEGE OF BUILDING

## CORPORATION MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 24 November 2020 at 3.45 pm via Microsoft Teams.

### PRESENT:

Julia Evans (JE) Chair  
Peter Norris (PN) Vice Chair  
Simon Bray (SB)  
Andrew Kenny (AK)  
Rachel Lindley (RL)  
Caroline Meehan (CM)  
Derek Packer (DPa)  
Professor Dave Russell (PDR)  
Derek Whitehead (DW)  
Jackie Wignall (JW)  
Sarah Wilson (SW)

### IN ATTENDANCE:

David Pullein (DP) (Vice Principal – Finance & Resources)  
Nikki Davis (ND) (Vice Principal – Teaching, Learning & Quality)  
Michaela Beardsall (MB) (Clerk to the Corporation)  
Menna Bailey (Head of English) – Item 7

**ACTION  
BY AND  
TARGET DATE**

## 1. CHAIR'S AND GOVERNORS' COMMUNICATIONS

- 1.1 Melanie Tyson has resigned with immediate effect due to taking on extra workload across five regions. It is the intention of the Search and Governance Committee to recruit a qualified accountant to replace her. PN noted that Dr. Ivan Nip had not been replaced and this vacancy should also be considered by the Search and Governance Committee.

JE to write to Melanie Tyson to thank her for her work on behalf of the Audit Committee and the Board.

**JE  
18 Dec. 2020**

## 2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mark Scott and Mark Roper.

## 3. DETERMINATION OF ATTENDEES / OBSERVERS

The Corporation agreed attendees / observers at the meeting as per the attendance list.

## 4. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

## 5. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 October 2020 were approved as a true and accurate record.

**6. MATTERS ARISING**

**6.1 Ref Min 7**

Actioned.

**6.2 Ref Min 12**

Deferred - DW to present an updated report regarding summary 2019/20 KPIs to the Board in December 2020, to close them off.

DW  
15 Dec. 2020

**6.3 Ref Min 14**

Actioned – ND to present final SAR to next Board meeting.

ND  
15 Dec. 2020

**6.4 Ref Min 17**

Actioned.

**6.5 Ref Min 17**

Actioned.

**6.6 Ref Min 19**

ND to circulate final list of links utilising independent governors rather than staff governors.

ND  
1 Dec. 2020

**6.7 Ref Min 19**

Clerk advised that initial contact should be made between link College person before Christmas with two further meetings – one in spring term, one in summer term. Governors to contact links before Christmas and arrange for two further interaction activities later in academic year.

Governors  
1 Dec. 2020  
End of spring  
term

**6.8 Ref Min 19**

Actioned - ND circulated possible questions for governors with link details.

**6.9 Ref Min 20**

J Miah is working on some short videos covering different topics within safeguarding. These will be shared with Governors in due course. J Miah to upload training videos on to the Governor portal.

ND/JM  
29 April 2021

**6.10 Ref Min 22**

Taken under agenda item 17.

**7. PRESENTATION ON STUDENT PROGRESS / ACHIEVEMENT IN MATHS & ENGLISH**

Menna Bailey joined the meeting at this point to give a presentation on student progress in Maths and English.

The following key points were noted:

- An overview of the different progress measures in Maths and English
- The main changes in approach within the College namely a move from Functional Skills to all studying the GCSE qualification (except Apprenticeships). A very positive move as the GCSE qualification is valued much more highly than Functional Skills. It has had a positive impact on behaviour.

**7. PRESENTATION ON STUDENT PROGRESS / ACHIEVEMENT IN MATHS & ENGLISH (continued)**

- An explanation of the rigorous systems undertaken to award Centre Assessed Grades (CAGS) in the Summer 2020 examination series in light of the COVID 19 pandemic
- A description of the progress made to move the College's achievement from the bottom percentile nationally (221<sup>st</sup>/223 Colleges) to the top quartile (40<sup>th</sup>/223) in 2020.
- Successful transition to blended learning including online and face to face lessons
- Compliance with College's health and safety measures
- Use of Government catch-up tuition fund to support in 1:1's and small group booster sessions
- Developing links and CPD sessions to upskill LCB staff led by Grimbsy Institute
- Maintaining the wellbeing of students and staff in the departments

SW noted that this was a tremendous achievement and a real testament to the work of the College and shows significant progress in the right direction. She queried if this can be maintained in light of COVID?

M Bailey explained strategies including additional targeted interventions, targeted analysis question by question analysis and targeted revision. The importance of good mock exam performance has been impressed on to the students in case of further CAGS in 2021. However, the collegiate message is that exams as expected to go ahead as planned.

DPa introduced himself as the department link governor and queried the popularity of Maths and English. M Bailey explained the high status of both subjects as students understand the importance of achieving at least a grade 4 in both qualifications to access apprenticeships. ESOL (running for the first time this year) and evening classes are proving very popular.

ND explained that while the huge improvements are to be congratulated, the impact of COVID and missed schooling must be registered. Students continue to be re-engaged. Results will be very difficult to predict and the 2020 results come with a significant caveat due to the application of the algorithm.

AK brought forward feedback from the Student Liaison Committee - feedback from four students suggested that while they appreciated that online teaching proved to be a necessity, not all students had the relevant hardware. ND / M Bailey confirmed that those students have been attending College in the LRC in order to access the work, additional laptops have been purchased and one member of IT staff has been given responsibility for upskilling students with TEAMS etc.

DW wished to express his thanks to M Bailey (and I Matharu) for the presentation and their hard work and continuous improvement being made; he appreciated the increased amount of challenge faced with remote learning.

**The Board noted the presentation on student progress and achievement in Maths & English.**

## 8. UPDATE ON COVID

DW updated the Board on COVID cases from start of the academic year to 20/11/2020. This has become a routine daily management issue.

The following key points were noted:

- 30 staff have tested positive (of which 18 have impacted the College in terms of isolating contacts = 60%)
- 71 students have tested positive (of which 39 have impacted the College in terms of isolating contacts = 55%)
- Of the above, 1 staff member and 1 student have been hospitalised. Both have been discharged from hospital
- Of the above we can identify only one outbreak involving 3 staff members and 4 students with 5 of these being possible internal transmissions
- 30 staff have self-isolated because they have been symptomatic but subsequently tested negative
- 78 students have self-isolated because they have been symptomatic but subsequently tested negative
- 5 students are currently isolating pending test results
- 82 staff have self-isolated because they have been internal contacts of positive cases
- 298 students have self-isolated because they have been internal contacts of positive cases
- 21 staff have self-isolated because they have been external contacts of positive cases
- 165 students self-isolated because they have been external contacts of positive cases
- 23 staff have self-isolated because a member of their household has been symptomatic and the individual subsequently tested negative
- 58 students have self-isolated because a member of their household have been symptomatic and the individual subsequently tested negative.

A total of 861 COVID related cases since September.

Returns continue to be made are made daily to the DfE. Public Health England, Leeds City Council and the Office for Students also request information. The feedback received from Public Health England regarding the College's response to the pandemic has been very positive.

DW thanked Karen Rolinson and the HR Team, together with all SMT, managers and staff involved in coordinating and managing this incredible response.

### **Despite COVID:**

- The College recruitment is strong with 16-18 (lagged funding), new apprenticeship starts and HE above target, adults (AEB) continuing recruitment taking place through the year.
- Excellent work from staff in continuing to develop, adapt and be more flexible around remote learning and support. Teams working hard to help, in particular apprentices, that are continuing from last year to achieve due to lockdown, being furloughed, not being able to evidence workplace competence, EPA examination delays etc.

## 8. UPDATE ON COVID (continued)

- Concerns around Examinations this academic year with students/apprentices missing learning time due to COVID isolation etc. Need for more parity with Apprenticeship achievement flexibilities in line with their peers doing GCSEs and A levels. Apprentices seem to be the poor relations. Working with AoC and federations etc. to lobby for Apprentices
- Financially the College is in a strong position. There is some concern around apprentices' achievements and potentially AEB
- AoC continue to work with DfE and ESFA to help address: 16-18 growth, digital devices and internet connections, work experience, any AEB reconciliation, apprenticeship issues and spending review (due 25<sup>th</sup> Nov)
- All reasonably practicable steps are being taken to ensure that staff and students remain safe and well, and to keep the College open with students engaged in learning either on campus or remotely.

DW thanked all Business Support and Academic staff for their valued contributions.

JE reiterated her thanks expressed in the fortnightly catch up with DW and PN.

RL queried if staff could be thanked in any way? DW would do this after the December meeting in his Principal's Update.

DW  
17 Dec. 2020

SB reminded governors that extra days holidays have been given during the Christmas period which will not be taken from holidays.

DP also highlighted that during the initial lockdown period when sub-contracted cleaning and security staff were furloughed, the College ensured they received 100% of their wages rather than 80%.

DPa suggested that this should be heavily noted as this is not the norm and reflects the positive culture in the College.

**The Board noted the update on the College's response to COVID.**

## 9. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT

ND presented an overview of the curriculum and its current performance.

The following key points were noted:

### **2019-20 Results**

- Positive performance in general including apprenticeships, which is pleasing in light of COVID-19 and supporting students who had been furloughed
- National comparisons in data will not be available for 2019-20.
- **Recruitment:** Higher than expected numbers (against v2 budget) in 16-18 and apprentices – need to retain them past R04 census data to be eligible for (lagged) funding
- Improvements in Construction Crafts - particularly in L2 16-18 apprenticeships - very pleasing and must continue to improve.
- Additional classes in ESOL
- Adult learners – numbers will be reviewed in due course – ND to report on adult numbers.

ND  
26 Jan. 2021

## 9. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT (continued)

### Teaching and Learning

- Ongoing concerns dealing with lost learning and ability to achieve the qualifications within time frame.
- Lack of consistency not restricted to LCB. High school attendance dropping nationally.
- Awarding bodies are drip feeding extensions. Not consistent/detailed. No reduction in content. AOC continue to pursue this on behalf of colleges
- Some students awaiting their end point assessments – out of LCB's control
- Feedback from Student Liaison committee indicates that students feel well supported with staff being highly responsive, even outside of working hours
- Support from Grimsby Institute Ed tech - very well received by staff
- Support for online teaching continues to be provided and walkthroughs of lessons are being done virtually, with a report to follow in December.

ND to report on lesson walkthroughs.

ND  
15 Dec. 2020

PN challenged ND for feedback from the online teaching walkthroughs. ND responded that the overriding focus is going to be on assessment for learning (AFL). There is some really exceptional work but checks on learning have to be in place. Staff need to integrate what is expected in the classroom, online.

JE queried if lost learning could be quantified and noted the difficulty in practical skills areas.

ND explained the impact of inconsistency and lack of standardised and publicised response. Some students have no impact on their learning, while others may have lost 6 weeks in first term. It is an issue that College staff continue to raise in external fora.

JE queried if all colleges were in a similar situation. Any feedback?

ND explained that while anecdotal the evidence suggests that A level provision is easier to manage online (with the exception of the Arts); Barnsley College have shut an entire centre while others have experienced minimal impact. There is a high level of inconsistency and it is not a level playing field.

### Attendance, welfare and behaviour:

- Attendance currently 89.7%
- Maths and English and Multi-Skills are much lower and continues to be a focus as it is concerning
- 92 safeguarding concerns – very high
- Access to CPOMS gives College staff historical data which supports students' transition into College

SW queried the workload implications in relation to the safeguarding concerns. ND confirmed that it is significant as they are serious concerns rather than low level incidents which have a greater impact on workload. The College Police Officer is also supporting the work of the staff.

**9. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT** (continued)

**SPOCs:**

- New survey being implemented, positive results seen so far
- Now 25 questions instead of 80
- Employer feedback continues to be positive
- Positive feedback received regarding blended learning
- A full report will be provided in December

ND to provide a full report of SPOC data at a future Board meeting.

ND  
26 Jan. 2021

**The Board noted the Performance Management Report.**

**10. TEACHING, LEARNING & ASSESSMENT STRATEGY**

ND presented an update on the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy.

The strategy has been developed over three years rather than a single year approach. There is a continued focus on progress, attendance and attainment.

JE queried the progress on College's preparation for T Levels. ND explained that preparation has begun with ESFA monitoring reports being returned. This demonstrates readiness to launch the qualification in due course. Training from the ETF will also be undertaken by the relevant staff.

AK sought reassurance as PMRs have been suspended. In light of this, AK asked for clarification on which KPIs are being monitored that may indicate an issue. ND explained that retention/attendance/SPOC results are monitored by the Faculty Directors on a monthly basis and any issues would be raised and addressed immediately if any of the KPIs were not in line with expectations.

**The Board approved the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy.**

**11. BUDGET TIMETABLE**

DP presented item 11, the Budget timetable, for approval and gave an overview including:

- Setting out stages to end point in July.
- Number of returns to ESFA have increased.
- Last years' accounts
- Cash flow commentary
- IFMC in July

**The Board approved the Budget Timetable.**

## 12. MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS

DP Presented Item 12, the October 2020 management accounts, for noting.

The following key points were highlighted:

- Since the commentary was written the College has received notification from the ESFA that it is no longer in early intervention.
- DP reflected on the previous 10/11 years and noted that the ESFA's confidence in the College has increased.
- Learner numbers are sufficient to meet budget
- Retention and attainment now key
- £698k capital has been received from the Government
- Cash reserves are being built
- If student numbers are retained past census, there will be an additional potential £1million in extra funding to be received next academic year

DW thanked DP and the Finance team for the sterling work.

DW requested approval from the Board to contribute between £70k and £175k to the capital received from the Government to enhance the facilities at the North Street campus. This would also need to be budgeted for, as it was not in the 2020/21 budget.

DW explained that:

- As part of the Government capital support for FE, the first £20million has been allocated on a formulaic approach and LCB received £698k, linked to the current ESFA condition survey and/or the College can carry out its own surveys.
- Funding must be matched up to 25% (£175K) and all allocation spent before 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021
- The College has corresponded with the ESFA Capital team, and have suggested a contribution of 10% (approx. £70k)
- The money will be spent on the proposed upgrading of heating, toilet facilities and WIFI infrastructure at North Street
- However, an extension has been requested to minimise disruption to teaching and learning and to not undertake heating work during the winter months.
- ESFA capital team have responded, and a further response regarding the extension period is expected before Christmas; they did not query the 10% contribution offer.
- While remaining at North Street is not the long-term plan, the Executive Team recognise that it is crucial to ensure the same parity in terms of quality working and learning environment between North Street and South Bank.

The Executive, with the support from Governors, will:

- Commission an IT and Estates survey to work alongside the ESFA condition survey report and identify areas of the College that need investment to ensure parity with both South Bank buildings.
- Utilise as much of the ESFA capital, identified from the Surveys by the March deadline
- Commence works if the extension is not granted
- Schedule summer works if the extension is granted.

## 12. MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS (continued)

- Develop a property strategy working towards a phase 3 new building to replace North Street in a 5-10 year horizon, depending on capital grants availability and the College's financial health.

A lengthy discussion followed. DW explained the background and strategy on how Phase 1 & 2 at the South Bank campus were established and the need to reduce the original 6 sites across Leeds. The long-term aspiration to replace North Street with a new build was reiterated. This could be possible if external grant intervention at a high level could be secured but needed to be affordable to the College and without financial risk.

Governors agreed that:

- The potential to receive this level of funding is rare and with little risk, notwithstanding the COVID pandemic
- There is a good understanding of the local area and the industry
- The level of comfort is between £75-£175k
- The opportunity should be taken to maximise and utilise as much of the ESFA funding as possible to refurbish North Street.

JW, as staff governor, welcomed any upgrading of the facilities in North Street in the short to medium term.

**The Board approved a contribution of between £70K (10% contribution) to £175K, should the ESFA not accept the lower 10% contribution and welcomed a longer-term property strategy in due course.**

## 13. REVISED FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

DP presented Item 13 and noted that they had been thoroughly reviewed with minor changes made.

**The Board approved the Revised Financial Regulations.**

## 14. LEEDS COLLEGE OF BUILDING GOING CONCERN

DP presented Item 14 and noted that while this has been routine in most years, the auditors have raised the status due to the COVID pandemic.

RL - Going Concern has been looked at in detail at the Audit Committee. Grant Thornton will revisit before accounts are signed and undertake a reverse stress test. There are no concerns from auditors.

Governors were asked to note that:

- Sensitivity analysis was undertaken in the summer
- Income higher than budgeted.
- While 16-18 funding is lagged the College expects an additional £1m for next year if students are retained.
- The balance sheet is stronger than in previous years.
- There is significant head room in meeting the Bank covenants
- The College has been removed from early intervention which is a vote of confidence from ESFA.

**The Board noted the Going Concern report.**

**15. GRANT THORNTON ENGAGEMENT LETTERS**

DP presented three letters to the Board which had been thoroughly scrutinised at the Audit committee in the presence of the external auditors. The letters set out the scope of the auditors' work.

DP noted the slight change in financial statements and a £1m liability cap which had been agreed with ESFA. This poses little risk to the College.

**The Board approved 15a and noted 15b and 15c.**

**16. RISK MANAGEMENT (BUSINESS CONTINUITY) REPORT**

DP Presented the reduced report. Due to COVID associated delays, meetings have yet to take place. There is one piece of outstanding work to Map the journey from current to target risk, before next audit.

AK raised questions regarding the impact of the contractor liquidation and the defects schedule of works.

DP confirmed that a tendering process is imminent, and the work will be completed over the Christmas period. DP commented on the more positive relationship with Acaster rather than with Pythagoras.

**The Board noted the Risk Management Business Continuity Report.**

**16a. REVISED RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY & STRATEGY**

DP presented item 16a, the Revised Risk Management Policy & Strategy.

**The Board approved the Risk Management Policy & Strategy.**

**17. QUALITY IMPROVEMENT POLICY**

ND presented item 17, the Quality Improvement Policy.

ND confirmed that there had been discussions with managers at all levels, discussions at the staff forum group and it had been reviewed by the Unions prior to seeking approval from the Board. A pilot was due to be undertaken in Maths, however due to illness it is taking place in English.

PDR commented that it was a very good process for dealing with quality.

PN queried how would Governors see feedback? ND stated that this would be highlighted via the key points in the SAR as evidence base for TLA.

PDR confirmed that lengthy reports are not necessary as the details becomes operational.

**The Board approved the Quality Improvement Policy.**

**18. ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION STATEMENT**

ND presented Item 18 and noted that it had been thoroughly reviewed with minor changes made.

PDR highlighted the importance of being forward thinking. He also noted that moving from a statement to a plan would require a significant amount of work. Should this be a next step, the College should consider underrepresented groups first.

**The Board approved the Access and Participation Statement.**

**19. UPDATED GOVERNANCE KPIS**

The Clerk presented Item 19, the updated Governance KPI's which had been agreed by the Search and Governance Committee.

**The Board approved the targets for 2020/2021.**

**20. AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT**

PN noted that Item 20 had been received favourably by the Audit Committee. The report encapsulates everything that happened in the 2019/2020 year.

**The Board approved the Audit Committee Annual Report.**

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

AK queried the absence of the student governor, Ryan Cordingley (RC).

ND and MB will endeavour to engage RC in order to build his confidence to join the meeting. ND / MB to meet with RC and other student representatives.

**ND/MB  
31 Jan. 2021**

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 15 December 2020 at 3.45pm.