

LEEDS COLLEGE OF BUILDING

CORPORATION MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 16 November 2021 at 3.45 pm in Classroom 3 at South Bank 1 and via Teams.

PRESENT:

Peter Norris (PN) Chair
Mark Roper (MR) Vice Chair
Simon Bray (SB) (attended via Microsoft Teams)
Claire Curtis (CC)
Rachel Lindley (RL) (attended via Microsoft Teams)
Caroline Meehan (CM) (attended via Microsoft Teams)
Katherine Naisbitt (KN) (attended after item 1.1)
Derek Packer (DPa)
Dave Russell (DR)
Matthew Shields (MSh)
Derek Whitehead (DW)
Sarah Wilson (SW)

IN ATTENDANCE:

David Pullein (DP) (Vice Principal – Finance & Resources)
Karen Rolinson (KR) (Clerk to the Corporation)
Menna Bailey (MB) (Head of English & ESOL) – Item 7 only
Daniel Grimes (DG) (Quality Manager) – Item 7 only
Jackie Wignall (JW) (Head of Human Resources) – Item 8 only

ACTION
BY AND
TARGET DATE

1. CHAIR'S AND GOVERNORS' COMMUNICATIONS

- 1.1 KR explained that two prospective Governors had been interviewed last week and the Search & Governance Committee recommended to the Board Katherine Naisbitt as an Independent Governor and Elaine Armitage as an Independent Governor and member of the Audit Committee.

The Board approved Katherine Naisbitt (KN) as an independent Governor and Elaine Armitage (EA) as an Independent Governor and member of the Audit Committee.

KR explained that EA was unable to attend until the 14th December 2021 Audit and Board meetings. KN was invited to join the Board meeting from this point. All those present at the Board meeting introduced themselves.

- 1.2 MR gave an overview of the matters considered at the recent Audit Committee which included the external and internal audit findings. He confirmed that it had been a positive meeting. DP explained that currently there was an identified £672k funding risk, however, the paperwork that supports the funding was sent to external auditors last Friday for their consideration.
- 1.3 DPa gave an overview of the matters considered at the recent Search & Governance Committee which included: the revised Induction procedure; governance attendance; performance review; ESFA funding implications requiring Governor development reports and external Board review; and Governor recruitment and membership.

1. CHAIR'S AND GOVERNORS' COMMUNICATIONS (continued)

1.4 CM provided an overview of safeguarding and stated that the Team are currently managing 95 cases which mostly involved young people. 21 of these had West Yorkshire Police involvement, 3 were Prevent cases, 20 involved Child in Need or risk assessments. She stated that the case load had doubled in recent months and regular review meetings were taking place. There were a number of cases involving a high risk of criminalisation exploitation and a number of students with Education Health Care Plans and safeguarding needs. CM reported that during a Governors' Conference she had attended last week it was stated that Ofsted currently had a big focus on safeguarding and mental health issues. CM requested that Governors receive a termly update from the Safeguarding Team regarding these issues. PN stated that this was being considered for the Governor Away Day. CM stated that the Board need to demonstrate how the checks are in place. PN suggested that Governor Links may help triangulate this information and that DFC could perhaps provide the Board with an update from her experiences / point of view. DW suggested that Sharon Ryan, Head of Student Experience could also provide an update.

PN/KR
February 2022

1.5 PN confirmed that DW, KR & himself had met individually with the External Auditors prior to the final accounts being reported.

1.6 MSh confirmed that he had just done a tour of the South Bank facilities with DW and was impressed with the professionalism and that everything looks brand new. He felt that it was a very different experience to North Street. He had the opportunity to speak to students. KN reported that she also had done a tour with DW and was really impressed with everything she saw. DW reported on 2 students that were through to the National SkillBuild finals being held in Norfolk this week: Zara Dupoint – Drylining/Plastering full-time student Level 2 and Aaron Brady – Wall & Floor Tiling Level 2 Apprentice.

1.7 MR reported that he had attended the College open day with his nephew and that it was an excellent experience and the enthusiasm of the staff was evident. He confirmed that his nephew had subsequently applied to study at the College. MR also reported that he will be chairing an employer engagement forum on 29th November 2021. DW confirmed that the next College open day was scheduled for this Saturday (21st November) and that expected numbers looked good, with around 400 registrations.

1.8 PN stated that the Governor Away Day was planned for 22nd February 2022 which he understood was half term week and asked if governors had any difficulties with this. CC confirmed that she wouldn't be able to attend but didn't want this to affect the date of the meeting.

It was confirmed that the date of the Away Day would remain as 22nd February 2022.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Debbie Forsyth-Conroy, Oliver Harding-Jeans and Nikki Davis.

3. DETERMINATION OF ATTENDEES / OBSERVERS

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

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

5. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 October 2021 were approved as a true and accurate record.

6. MATTERS ARISING

6.1 Ref Min 5 (13 July 2021)
Carried forward.

6.2 Ref Min 18 (13 July 2021)
Actioned – on Audit Committee agenda 16 November 2021.

6.3 Ref Min 19 (13 July 2021)
Actioned – on Board agenda (Item 20).

6.4 Ref Min 1.5
Carried forward.

6.5 Ref Min 6
Taken under Item 21.

6.6 Ref Min 7
Actioned - ND would ensure that a student experience update is presented termly.

6.7 Ref Min 8
Actioned – added to Governor Portal under Development / Training.

6.8 Ref Min 8
Actioned – on Board Agenda (Item 1).

6.9 Ref Min 10
Unable to separate English & Maths for KPI but it is separate in PMR. Target for 16-18 attendance for English & Maths has increased following feedback. DW confirmed that he had discussed this with ND and the 16-18 attendance had increased from 84% to 88%.

6.10 Ref Min 13
Carried forward.

6.11 Ref Min 18
Actioned - ND would provide this information on a termly basis to Governors.

6.12 Ref Min 19
Actioned – questionnaire updated.

6. MATTERS ARISING (continued)

6.13 Ref Min 24

Actioned.

6.14 Ref Min 24

Actioned – agenda updated to include portal column.

7. GCSE ENGLISH & SUPPORT FOR TEACHING & LEARNING

MB provided an overview which included: Departmental Provision; Headline Figures for GCSE (Summer result 2021); Progress Measures; GCSE English 2021/22 update and observations; Examples of being an effective department; English Department Priorities for 2021/22. *The presentation will be made available for Governors on the Governor Portal.*

DPa asked about building technology experience for students and whether this was an issue with College or personal equipment. MB responded that students struggled in the days of COVID as they struggled to read large amounts of text off their phones. However, things had improved and a vocational department (Construction Crafts) had purchased laptops specifically for English use and the further laptops had been borrowed. These were being utilised and engagement was good. DW stated that laptops had been received from the DfE and through the 16-18 allocations another 40 plus had been provided. DP explained that the College had also purchased 200 laptops.

DR stated that MB had provided an interesting presentation and asked whether delivery was face-to-face or online. MB responded that delivery had all been face-to-face since the College had reopened on 8th March 2021 following the lockdown. She stated that some adult provision was done remotely and confirmed that laptops were being used in classrooms to ensure students were familiar with them if remote learning was necessary in future.

DPa queried external grading and the reasons why the College graded one grade below. MB stated that the Department has two Advanced Practitioners plus four AQA markers and that they had followed the system rigorously and gave grades that they felt the students deserved and she was unable to comment on how other external organisations graded. She confirmed that last year the College had 100 grades that were changed upwards.

RL said that she had found it a really interesting presentation and was pleased with the integration across College. She asked about the mentoring process and how this was being provided. MB replied that there were two types of provision. The College had its own student mentors that support specific students and are part of the Inclusive Learning Support (ILS) and secondly, the College was introducing Reading Mentors that are just about to start in College and the hope is that student fluency will be increased. DW stated and felt that if ND was at the meeting, she would agree and be saying that with grades students are coming into College with it is an uphill struggle for a number of students to make the same level of progress this year and next. He stated that the Team are working hard but this is a word of caution in relation to what may be achieved. PN reminded Governors that ND had mentioned this at the last Board meeting to put the issue in perspective.

7. GCSE ENGLISH & SUPPORT FOR TEACHING & LEARNING (continued)

DG gave an overview of Teaching & Learning support which included: the current provision; a review of how we are doing against the key priorities set in December 2019; what still needs to be done. *The presentation will be made available for Governors on the Governor Portal.*

DR queried how things are going with being back on site and what DG has observed. DG replied that there were some brilliant opportunities to deliver online and whilst most people have gone to what they did before there is still a 30-hour digital component to the course. He stated that lots of students still don't have the resources at home and if resources are available in some instances people are not as confident, so it appears a mixed picture. DW confirmed that in the BSE and HECDM areas employers and students had requested online provision particularly where students needed to travel and be accommodated in Leeds and felt remote learning in this area was delivered very well during & beyond COVID lockdowns.

PN thanked MB and DG for their presentations and said that it was encouraging to hear what's being done in the interests of students and the support mechanisms in place.

8. STAFFING REPORT AND STAFF SURVEY

8a) Staffing Report

JW presented the Staffing Report for 2020/21 which included: the total numbers of staff had remained the same as the previous year; overall turnover has decreased; there was difficulty recruiting to some areas; equality data and the difficulty of obtaining ethnicity information, whilst numbers of staff with a declared disability had risen due to more declarations being received during COVID.

DPa queried the age-related information, specifically staff over 50. JW responded that all ages are covered in the report and this presents a visual picture of College staff.

RL asked whether anything had surprised JW or if there were any informed actions that Governors could take. JW replied that it had been a difficult year and the College has an ageing workforce but had recruited more apprentices which tended to be younger in age. RL asked whether any improvement should be made in relation to the diversity information. JW confirmed that a piece of consultancy work was being done in the College on Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) which may help. KR confirmed that the outcome of this work commissioned by ND would be brought to Governors, potentially at the Away Day in February 2022. DR said that diversity in staffing was important so that students are able to see people around that look like them. DPa stated that this applied to the Board too. PN responded that this was a point well made and this was currently being looked in to. A general discussion took place regarding the difficulty of attracting a diverse workforce into construction.

SW noted that turnover was low last year and queried whether JW anticipated this increasing. JW responded that it was very low up to July 2021, there is some increase now but this is not excessive.

8. **STAFFING REPORT AND STAFF SURVEY** (continued)

8b) **Staff Survey**

JW gave an overview of the Staff Survey results for 2020/21. RL congratulated the College leadership for stepped improvements. She mentioned that the 'Complaints not seen as an opportunities' and that this could be a reflection of the culture. JW responded that she didn't have any major concerns and, in some areas, it is difficult to get a true measure as some responses are contradictory, for example communication. DW said that the survey signposted some concerns and these would be looked into to see if anything could be improved but this is difficult as the survey was anonymous. DR said it was very difficult to get this information and the results were good. He asked JW not to use the descriptor 'BAME' as it wasn't an acceptable term anymore and she confirmed that this would be changed.

JW
December 2021

PN asked staff governors for their views. CC confirmed that overall this was a very positive survey and felt it reflected how well the College responded to the pandemic and that staff felt supported. SB stated that it was tricky to answer sometimes and there was a degree of interpretation. He queried that the percentage of staff that didn't respond to the survey may feel more negatively and the issue was could the College improve based on feedback.

The Board noted the Staffing Report and Staff Survey.

9. **LETTER FROM OfS REGARDING REPORTABLE EVENTS**

DW stated that the letter from OfS confirmed that they were more or less reinstating the pre COVID level of reporting requirements.

The Board noted the letter from the OfS.

10. **COVID UPDATE**

DW confirmed that COVID was still high on the College radar, the risk assessment was still being reviewed and Kat Towler was overseeing the actions with the Senior Management Team. He said that COVID cases were low and this was encouraging and gave an overview of the numbers (8 suspected students & 1 confirmed student, 1 suspected support staff, 1 teaching staff member confirmed & 2 confirmed support staff). He stated that it was helping that individuals were not having to isolate as much as the previous year. He confirmed that there had been no internal transmission.

11. **BUDGET TIMETABLE**

DP stated the budget timetable used to be a mandatory requirement of Audit Questionnaire, it no longer is, but he felt it was useful to provide Governors with a high level view of the budget timetable.

The Board noted the Budget Timetable.

12. MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS (SEPTEMBER 2021)

DP presented the September 2021 management accounts and stated that the focus was on budgeting rather than actual in these management accounts. The focus for October to December 2021 is to ensure that expenditure is under control. He confirmed up to the end of October that it was. PN asked DP to pass on congratulations to the Finance Team for significantly reducing the number of debtors.

The Board noted the Management Accounts (September 2021).

13. ESFA LETTER DATED 25 OCTOBER 2021 REGARDING COLLEGE FINANCIAL HEALTH 2020/21 TO 2022/23 AND FINANCIAL DASHBOARD

DP provided an overview that the College had submitted its financial plan to the ESFA in July 2021 and the letters presented to the Committee stated that ESFA agree that the College is in good financial health. The ESFA had also provided a useful financial dashboard. PN congratulated DP on a fantastic achievement. DW stated that the financial health was very close to outstanding.

DPa stated that the apparent cancellation of the eastern leg of the HS2 to Leeds would potentially affect land values and questioned whether it was an opportunity for the Board to consider phase 3 and what the College could afford to do. DW replied that the long term Accommodation Strategy was to replace the North Street Campus and build equally as good buildings as we have at the South Bank Campus. He said that the College needed to build reserves and get a contribution from any external sources which would make a new build more attainable. He and the Exec continue to work with WYCA, Leeds City Council, developers etc. to continually promote our accommodation aspirations. DW reminded Governors that the College cannot take on too much borrowing as the bank covenants must be met. DP stated that paying off some of the current loan may be advantageous. DPa felt that the conditions survey of North Street may need updating.

The Board noted the ESFA letter and financial dashboard.

14. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS, INCLUDING FINAL 2020/21 ACHIEVEMENTS (TO DATE AND ALL PROVISION)

DW presented the performance management reports on behalf of ND and confirmed that for 2020/21 Education & Training retention is at 90%, the pass timely rates at 95% and achievement timely at 81%, which were really good figures. In relation to Apprenticeships, DW stated that Governors were aware of the problems due to COVID in ensuring apprentices passed in a timely manner as the achievement timely pass rate was 57%. He stated that the flexibilities present in Education & Training were not available in Apprenticeships, however, the overall achievement of 75% meant that they have generally done very well, despite COVID disruptions.

DW said he was disappointed in relation to 16-18 recruitment that the figures are lower than expected and he explained that this will affect next year's funding. He said that the College was doing very well currently in enrichment engagement by students.

14. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS, INCLUDING FINAL 2020/21 ACHIEVEMENTS (TO DATE AND ALL PROVISION) (continued)

MR stated that he understood the introduction of T levels had been delayed by a year. PN confirmed that he also had heard this. DW replied that his understanding was that the withdrawal of BTECs had been pushed back 12 months and T levels roll-out was still continuing. He confirmed that the College was ready to start one cohort of T Level students as planned in September 2022. DW confirmed that he would clarify the situation and provide an update in the minutes.

The Board noted Performance Management Report.

Subsequent to the meeting, DW confirmed that the Education Secretary made a concession to retain BTECs as he announced none would be defunded until at least 2024, rather than 2023 under the original timetable.

15. RISK MANAGEMENT (BUSINESS CONTINUITY) TERMLY REPORT

DP stated that report was the standard Risk Management (Business Continuity) Termly Report and it had been to Audit prior to the Board meeting. PN asked for clarification regarding the numbers of Top Priority Risks. DP responded that he would look into this and provide the necessary clarification.

DP
December 2021

RL stated that she felt that the information was presented in a great way, however, she felt there needed to be the right balance so that Governors understood the big issues and were provided with this information periodically. DP responded that the top risks are put on the portal. RL questioned how Governors got the confidence that the big issues were being addressed. DP confirmed that he will ensure that this is covered in his next report. PN informed Governors that he had been discussing with KR that 'risk' was potentially a topic for the Away Day in February and that this would be considered when drafting the programme for the Away Day.

DP
March 2022

PN/KR
February 2022

The Board noted the Risk Management (Business Continuity) Termly Report.

**16. RSM ENGAGEMENT LETTERS
16A) Leeds College of Building & 16B) LCB Enterprises Ltd**

DP explained that these are standard letters required by ESFA and that Audit recommended them to the Board for signature. DP explained that the Chair of Governors would need to sign letter 16a and a Director of LCB Enterprises needed to sign 16b (which DW had actioned).

The Board approved Item 16A) for signature by the Chair & Principal and noted Item 16B).

17. AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

KR presented the report which needed to be issued to the ESFA with the final accounts. MR stated that the Audit Committee had just considered the Report and it reflected their view. RL (as the Chair of Audit upto July 2021) confirmed that she was happy to sign the report.

The Board approved the Audit Committee Annual Report.

18. REVISED CODE OF CONDUCT FOR CORPORATION MEMBERS

KR presented the revised Code of Conduct for Corporation Members and said that some minor amendments have been made to it. She informed Governors that this Code had been considered at the Search & Governance Committee and had been recommended to the Board. It was also recommended that a session at the Away Day in February 2022 covered 'Governance' and after this date Governors would be asked to sign the Code.

**KR
February 2022**

The Board approved the Revised Code of Conduct for Corporation Members.

19. REVISED AoC CODE OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

KR presented the revised Code of Good Governance and stated that the Search & Governance Committee had approved the revised Code and recommended it to the Board with the suggestion that they discuss anything further they needed to do in relation to EDI and sustainability. KR stated that Governors needed to have oversight of these issues in relation to the code and that we needed to report compliance against the Code in 2022/23. PN suggested that these issues would be picked up in the New Year. DW stated that DP and Jim Thomas (Estates Manager) were dealing with the sustainability issues for the College and this would be fed back to Governors.

**DP
March 2022**

The Board approved the adoption of the revised AoC Code of Good Governance.

20. UPDATE OF PROGRESS – GOVERNANCE ACTION PLAN 2021/22

KR presented the termly progress against the Governance Action Plan which she stated had originally been approved in July 2021. She said that this had been discussed at the Search & Governance Committee who agreed that it was a dynamic plan and needed to be changed and updated as necessary. She noted that one of the issues raised by Governors was the need for improved CMI awareness and an action in the plan was for Governors to present to other Governors covering their areas of expertise. MR agreed that he would provide the first overview at the Board meeting in December.

**MR December
2021**

The Board noted the update of progress on the Governance Action Plan 2021/22.

21. STUDENT LIAISON COMMITTEE & LINK GOVERNOR

KR presented the paper which had been written by ND and stated that this had been considered by the Search & Governance Committee who had resolved to recommend to the Board that it considers this paper so that Governors explicitly understand and accept that they are undertaking the student feedback activity through their link Governor role and the Student Liaison Committee is being stood down. KR confirmed that a review would be undertaken during 2021/22 by Sharon Ryan (Head of Student Experience) & Daniel Grimes (Quality Manager) in relation to obtaining student feedback with a view that this would be in place in 2022/23. She said that she understood from ND that the Student Liaison Committee process wasn't working as it was too formal to effectively obtain feedback. PN provided an overview of his recent Governor link feedback and interaction with students. DW encouraged Governors to engage with students.

21. **STUDENT LIAISON COMMITTEE & LINK GOVERNOR** (continued)

A lengthy discussion followed regarding the different approaches for Governors to obtain feedback. DW recommended to the Board that Governors accept the changes suggested in ND's proposal and said that he felt a variety of approaches could work with students and that Governors should work with their link in College. He didn't feel that formality was needed in the arrangements. PN stated that Governors should test it out over the year using different methods of engagement and see what works. It was agreed that feedback would be received at the end of the academic year.

ND
July 2022

The Board approved the recommendation regarding the Student Liaison Committee and the revised Link Governors.

22. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

DW informed the Board of his intention to take early retirement at the end of the current academic year. He said that he had been at the College for 18 years as Deputy Principal and Principal & CEO and had 44 years connected to the Construction Industry. He felt the College was in a very strong position and it was time for someone else to take over the College and move it further forward. He said that it would be business as usual until the end of the academic year but the Board needed to take the decision regarding his replacement.

PN confirmed that he had accepted DW's resignation and that he would like the Board's consensus to replace DW and recruit a new Principal & CEO.

A lengthy discussion followed and Derek was thanked for his contribution to the College.

It was agreed that a replacement Principal & CEO would be sought. PN asked for up to 3 Governor volunteers to join a task & finish recruitment group alongside himself. He asked Governors to let KR know by Friday if they would be willing to volunteer. It was confirmed that the group would liaise with KR & JW to utilise their experience in this area.

Governors
19 Nov 21

The Board approved the establishment of a Task & Finish Group to recruit a replacement Principal & CEO.

PN thanked all Governors for their contributions during the Board meeting.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 14 December 2021 at 3.45pm (Meeting Room 1, North Street).