

LEEDS COLLEGE OF BUILDING

CORPORATION MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 5 October 2021 at 3.45 pm in Meeting Room 1, North Street.

PRESENT:

Peter Norris (PN) Chair
Mark Roper (MR) Vice Chair
Simon Bray (SB) (attended via Microsoft Teams)
Claire Curtis (CC)
Debbie Forsythe-Conroy (DFC) (attended via Microsoft Teams)
Oliver Harding-Jeans (OHJ)
Caroline Meehan (CM) (attended via Microsoft Teams)
Matthew Shields (MSh)
Derek Whitehead (DW)
Sarah Wilson (SW)

IN ATTENDANCE:

David Pullein (DP) (Vice Principal – Finance & Resources)
Nikki Davis (ND) (Vice Principal – Teaching, Learning & Quality)
Karen Rolinson (KR) (Clerk to the Corporation)

ACTION
BY AND
TARGET DATE

1. CHAIR'S AND GOVERNORS' COMMUNICATIONS

1.1 PN welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the academic year and the first meeting in person since February 2020 due to the pandemic. He explained that three governors (SB, DFC, CM) were attending via Microsoft Teams as they were unable to attend in person. This was a trial and would be reviewed at the end of the meeting. PN thanked the College IT Team for setting up the IT facilities to enable attendance by a blended approach.

1.2 PN also welcomed KR to her first meeting as Governance Advisor & Clerk to the Corporation. KR gave a brief update relating to ongoing recruitment for new Governors and explained that Claire Curtis (CC) had been appointed as the new Support Staff Governor.

Claire Curtis was approved by the Board as the new Support Staff Governor and joined the meeting at this point.

1.3 PN explained that MS was taking a short period of leave of absence until January 2022 due to health reasons and that he wouldn't be counted in Governor attendance figures for quoracy purposes during this period.

1.4 Update from DW regarding Student Awards

- 2 LCB students were winners out of 72 competitors in the Painters & Decorators Association Apprentice of the Year competition. Apprentice of the Year Senior was won by Nicole Germaine (Level 2) who works for Engie at Leeds General Infirmary and Elisha Whyte was runner up and works for Bradford MDC.
- Harry Aldridge who has completed his Level 3 Apprenticeship in Roof Slating & Tiling (employed by Aldridge & Sons Roofing Ltd) received the CUPA Slate Award.
- At the CECA Awards 2019/20 & 2020/21 (joint ceremony due to COVID) 3 LCB students received awards. The 2020 winners were Liam Burke (employed by Peter Duffy Ltd) and Ruth Watson (employed by J N Bentley / Mott MacDonald Bentley). The 2021 winner was Sam Roseby employed by SISK).

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

1.5 Board Objectives (Item 1)

PN presented the paper on Board Objectives stating that they would provide a focus for the Board and asked for feedback. He also stated that following his one-to-one conversations with Governors and feedback received regarding Board papers, this was the first meeting with a mixed approach of some Board items being sent by email with all papers available on the portal and would welcome feedback at the end of the meeting.

DFC confirmed that the objectives were a really helpful framework and direction of travel for governance. PN stated that the objectives would be reviewed at the end of 2021/22 linked to a review of Board performance.

**KR
July 2022**

The Board approved the Board Objectives 2021/22.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Rachel Lindley, Derek Packer and Dave Russell.

3. DETERMINATION OF ATTENDEES / OBSERVERS

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

4. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None.

5. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2021 were approved as a true and accurate record.

6. MATTERS ARISING

6.1 Ref Min 5

Carried forward.

6.2 Ref Min 6

KR agreed to reissue the Link Governor / Manager list to Governors.

**KR
Oct 21**

6.3 Ref Min 8

ND has added this to the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee agenda.

6.4 Ref Min 8.1

Actioned.

6.5 Ref Min 8.2

Development Day has been planned. ND will discuss with Human Resources regarding offer of support in the future.

6. MATTERS ARISING (continued)

6.6 Ref Min 12

Taken under Agenda Item 16.

6.7 Ref Min 12.1

Taken under Agenda Item 17.

6.8 Ref Min 13

Confirmed Curriculum Area Reviews are based on the Ofsted methodology and will start this academic year.

6.9 Ref Min 13.1

Actioned.

6.10 Ref Min 15

Taken under Agenda Item 8.

6.11 Ref Min 18

Carried forward.

6.12 Ref Min 19

Carried forward.

6.13 Ref Min 20

KR confirmed that Governors would be contacted by phone to obtain an overview of activity and a report presented termly.

7. STUDENT EXPERIENCE

ND presented an overview of the 2020/21 Student Experience as Sharon Ryan (SR), Head of Student Experience, was unable to attend the meeting. ND explained that the area was diverse and covered lots of challenging functions. ND gave an overview of the response to COVID-19 which was still not over and the additional challenges faced. In terms of lessons learned, ND stated that the College is now seeing the long-term effects of COVID. After nearly 2 years the gaps in terms of social skills, behavioural struggles, literacy and numeracy skills have widened further and there is a lot more work to do. The emphasis on digital skills is vital. ND said there was a lot of work to be proud of including the innovative ways of working by the Team and the partnership with Mind Mate. There were also a number of challenges including increase in Child Criminal Exploitation / drugs / knife activities; a significant increase in High Needs Students; increase in 16-18 enrolments; increased responsibilities for the Team and staffing changes. ND explained that the priorities for 2021-22 would include: Quality First Teaching; Positive Relationship Management; reducing the number of withdrawn students; reestablishing student engagement with enrichment; improving student voice activities.

MR complimented the area on the level of support provided to staff / students and asked about the capacity of Maths & English given the skills gap. ND confirmed that initial assessments were still being done and stepping stones to GCSEs may be needed. SW queried the level of pastoral care resources and ND confirmed that more Personal Advisors had been recruited in the summer and whilst the Senior Management Team has foreseen the increase in numbers the significant increase in behavioural issues had not been envisaged.

7. STUDENT EXPERIENCE (continued)

MSh queried whether any resources had been asked for and refused. DP confirmed additional resources had been built into the budget. ND confirmed that the Tuition Fund had helped and that nothing had been refused.

PN queried the level of staff morale. DW confirmed that generally most staff were happy to be back into College but number are still anxious regarding risks associated with COVID; staff were still agile with flexible home working where possible, although this was more problematic in practical areas. OHJ stated that online studying had been hard but he felt it was more difficult for practical courses. He was very happy to be back in College with the ability to socialise more. CC confirmed that staff morale was very good and the vast majority felt very well supported.

PN stated that the presentation was useful and asked ND to pass on the Board's thanks to SR. He asked that the Board receives feedback in relation to student experience as the year goes on.

**ND
Termly**

The Board noted the Student Experience presentation.

8. SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN & VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY 2021/22

ND presented the revised Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults Policy 2021/22. She explained that Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) had been updated and that more responsibilities were coming to colleges in relation to safeguarding and in some instances leading the case management. The national media reports earlier this year in relation to sexual harassment in education had also increased awareness. ND explained that standard governor safeguarding training would be placed on the portal. These were videos that were College facilitated and also from Education Training Foundation (ETF). She asked for Governor approval to do this.

The Board approved the use of the Portal for standard safeguarding training.

ND explained that more specific training provided by the Equality, Inclusion & Safeguarding Manager, Jubar Miah (JM), would be provided at the Governor Away Day in February 2022.

MR asked how the Policy would be rolled out and ND confirmed that it was compulsory that all staff must read Part 1 of KCSiE and in addition JM was providing updates for staff teams. ND stated that she would check when the videos were on the Portal and let Governors know that this had been done.

**ND
Oct 2021**

The Board approved the Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults Policy 2021/22.

Safeguarding update from Lead Governor

CM stated that she hadn't been able to meet with SR but JM had provided her with an update for Governors. As already stated, KCSiE had been updated. Governors needed to check that effective case management was in place and that the College had a robust learning & development plan in relation to safeguarding. Lots of risks remained with online activity and the College was reviewing its Internet Safety Strategy which Governors will need to monitor.

8. SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN & VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY 2021/22
(continued)

Safeguarding update from Lead Governor (continued)

Reports from the Leeds Silver Group had noted an increase in Islamic and far right activity following the withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan. Far right groups had been leafleting areas of the city which had potential to influence parts of the College.

PN thanked CM for her update and it was confirmed that Governors were happy for a safeguarding update by CM to be a standing item on the agenda. CM confirmed that she was happy to speak to SR/JM to provide feedback at meetings.

**KR/CM
16 Nov 2021**

9. HEALTH & SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21

DP presented the Health & Safety Annual Report 2020/21. He stated that due to the pandemic the College had 2 incomplete years of statistics, however, it was positive that the ISO Standard had been obtained again which was done remotely. He was hopeful that the 2021/22 report would be a complete year and Governors agreed that for comparison purposes it was appropriate to go back to the last full year of statistics in 2018/19.

The Board noted the Health & Safety Annual Report 2020/21.

10. STRATEGIC PLAN ANNUAL KPIS FOR 2021/22

DW presented the Strategic Plan Annual KPIS for 2021/22 and stated that this would be the in-year monitoring report. The report corresponded with the six Strategic Aims that had been approved by the Board in July 2021. DW asked that the Board approve the targets. He stated if the actual was over 90%, 1% had been added as a target and if under 89%, 2% had been added to the target. He said that he felt this was challenging but realistic for 2021/22 and would be a new basing year for the College (following previous two years of COVID disruption).

MSh asked if challenging targets were harder due to COVID. DW confirmed that they were harder however, the Executive Team, felt they were achievable. He said that the challenge was not fully known until all students had been fully assessed, particularly in relation to English and Maths but the targets need setting for the year and all managers / staff then to work towards them.

DFC recognised the challenges but felt the 16-18 attendance at 84% was too low and in schools it is around 90%. DW confirmed that the starting point from schools is very low in many cases at the moment. ND confirmed that there is massive variation between cohorts of students across College. DFC said that consideration may be given to separating the English & Maths attendance figures and having these as separate targets. ND agreed to look at this outside the meeting and potentially identify English & Maths separately.

**ND
Nov 2021**

The Board approved the Strategic Plan Annual KPIS for 2021/22.

11. STUDENT RECRUITMENT UPDATE

ND provided an update on student recruitment. She said that the 16-18 recruitment had reduced to 1110 from the 1131 stated in the report and that data cleansing was ongoing. The focus was on keeping students on the right programme. The reduction in anticipated numbers was due to some young people staying on at school, some gaining employment and some making multiple applications. She confirmed that the enrolment process was being reviewed to better inform the process next year.

ND confirmed that Apprenticeship and HE recruitment were looking okay at the moment and the Adult figures were not available as yet. PN asked if there were plans to streamline the Apprenticeship sign up process. ND replied that this needed looking at in terms of online. DP confirmed that the systems were complicated due to the various different aspects of signup, particularly as cofunded employers now had to reserve funding on the national system.

The Board noted the Student Recruitment update.

12. COVID UPDATE

DW gave an update on COVID and stated that the College was keeping up to date with the DfE and what was happening locally via the Local Authority. The College Risk Assessment was being reviewed weekly or fortnightly depending on need and there had been a relaxation of the self-isolation situation compared to last year. Kat Towler (KT) had taken over as COVID Co-Ordinator and was updating the Emergency Outbreak Plan. He said it was great that the College had bounced back to life and the Government was promoting face to face delivery but acknowledged that some staff and students were still anxious about the situation. At the present time the following were affected by COVID:

Students

23 x suspected cases of coronavirus (COVID-19)

3 x confirmed cases of coronavirus

2 x required to remain at home or isolate by NHS Test & Trace

1 x absent due to isolation for other reasons

Teaching staff

2 x confirmed cases of coronavirus

8 x other reasons for absence (long term absence, not COVID related)

Support staff

1 x suspected case of coronavirus

SB said he felt that the College was doing everything that it can but recognised that COVID was still around and that staff and students have to be careful. PN acknowledged that there was a robust action plan in place and DW confirmed that staff were working collectively together and credit must be given to everyone for that.

The Board noted the COVID update.

13. WEST YORKSHIRE CONSORTIUM OF COLLEGES (WYCC)

DW gave an overview of WYCC and the establishment of the Joint Venture (JV) and whilst the JV had been successful in the past it was less successful currently and was struggling financially predominantly due to cash flow. A breakeven budget had been agreed for this academic year. DW said that he wanted to raise awareness of Governors of the financial concerns and would keep them updated.

MR stated that WYCC was a well-respected organisation and queried what the issues were and what the timeframe was. DW confirmed that WYCC needed to review the operating model of the JV as they had been successful in securing bids but they probably needed to look at what is realistically achievable across delivery partners and what can be delivered. DW gave a timeframe of February 2022 and stated that he would bring this back to the Board as more information was available and appropriate. He confirmed that the College financial liability was £10 but morally the College may need to consider its position as two other colleges are combined creditors and owed almost £1m. He also confirmed that the issue was on the College Risk Register.

PN queried whether, at this stage, there was a need to consider a contingent liability with regard to the College's position. DP confirmed that this was not necessary at present.

SW asked if the JV was short of cash. DP confirmed that they were and that unfortunately payments from DWP were not received quick enough. He said that the JV had been challenged to produce a 'going concern'. MSh queried the relationship with the main creditors. DW confirmed that it was very good and that stakeholders are trying to help the consortium and don't want it to collapse.

PN asked that Governors are kept up to date.

**DW
Feb 2022**

The Board noted the update on West Yorkshire Consortium of Colleges.

14. UPDATE ON 2020/21 FINAL ACCOUNTS

DP confirmed that the 2020/21 Accounts were 90% complete and that the external auditors were in the College for their second week and that he didn't expect any issues. He said that he still needed the final Apprenticeship achievements to go in the Accounts and a draft would be considered by the Audit Committee in November with the full & final Accounts presented at the December Board meeting. He explained that resilience was good as the cash in bank had gone up which meant that the College had the ability to withstand any major issues.

The Board noted the update on the 2020/21 final accounts.

Debbie Forsythe-Conroy left the Board Meeting at this point.

15. 2020/21 HE / FE COMPLAINTS REPORT

ND presented the 2020/21 Complaints Report and said that the College had received significantly less complaints in-year. The demographic data was available and unfortunately a disproportionate number of females and students from a BAME background had complained during the year. ND said this would be looked at by the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee with the Executive Team supporting the necessary actions. Governors would receive feedback via the Management Report.

The Board noted the 2020/21 HE / FE Complaints Report.

16. STUDENT PERCEPTION OF COLLEGE (SPOC2) INCLUDING NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY (NSS)

ND presented the Survey Report and noted that there had been a lower response this year due to COVID as access to students was reduced. She stated that it was pleasing that satisfaction rates regarding online activity had improved and overall, there were very high satisfaction rates.

PN congratulated all Teams involved with the Survey.

The Board noted the Student Perception of College (SPOC2) including National Student Survey (NSS).

17. TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT REPORT / COVID REPORT 2020/21

ND presented both reports and highlighted that the COVID Response and Quality Improvement Plan had been incorporated into the College Self-Assessment, particularly as COVID was so intertwined with College activity in 2020/21. She asked for Governor approval for this to be a combined Report. She confirmed that it was important that the actions were put into the final report and this would come back to Governors in December 2021 for final consideration and approval. She also confirmed that DFC (as a current Ofsted Inspector) had confidence in the approach as she has seen it previously.

The Board approved the format and noted the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Report 2020/21.

18. TEACHING, LEARNING & DIGITAL STRATEGY 2021/2024

ND presented the Teaching, Learning & Digital Strategy 2021/24 and said that the Strategy focused on digital skills to upskill, train & support students. Whilst it was a three-year strategy, she was happy to do updates, but it only needed approving every 3 years.

MR said that at the June 2021 meeting Governors were informed of digital poverty and asked how the response was to that. ND confirmed that data is being captured through Induction and there is a facility to loan out laptops. MSh said that he was interested in the staff training and the target in relation to Microsoft Innovative Educator. PN queried whether there would be barriers for staff. ND confirmed that Indy Matharu (IM), Head of Maths & Digital Skills, was obtaining a base line position of skills.

18. TEACHING, LEARNING & DIGITAL STRATEGY 2021/2024 (continued)

SB noted that the IT Team do a fantastic job but the biggest challenge was the consistency of resource across the College. ND confirmed that she would take the comments on board and provide a termly update under the KPI's.

ND
Termly

The Board approved the Teaching, Learning & Digital Strategy 2021/2024.

19. REGULARITY SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRES

DP provided a background to Item 19 by confirming that the External Audit forms 2 parts: an audit of the College Accounts, which was mentioned above under Item 14, is taking place in College currently; and the Regularity Audit which covers the questionnaires in Item 19. The Regularity Audit is done every year and for the last two years an additional COVID-19 Questionnaire must be completed. Both documents must be approved by the Board for signature by the Chair and Principal (as Accounting Officer).

PN asked about staff training on the requirements of the Bribery Act 2010 (page 6 of the questionnaire). DP acknowledged that training needed to be refreshed and that he would update the questionnaire to reflect this.

DP
Oct 2021

The Board approved the Regularity Self-Assessment Questionnaires (once amended as above) for signature by the Chair and Principal.

20. PERFORMANCE & REMUNERATION COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21

KR presented the Annual Report that had previously been approved by the Performance & Remuneration Committee and was a requirement of the AoC Senior Post Holders Remuneration Code.

The Board approved the Performance & Remuneration Committee Annual Report 2020/21.

21. REVIEW OF 2020/21 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

KR presented a paper regarding confidential items from the Board and Committee meetings in 2020/21. It was recommended that papers were retained.

The Board approved the retention of confidential minutes from the Corporation Meetings of 15th December 2020 (Item 12) and 8th June 2021 (Item 13) and also retention of confidential Performance & Remuneration Committee minutes and papers of 15th December 2020 and 21st June 2021.

22. GOVERNOR PROGRESS AGAINST KPI'S AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2020/21

KR presented a Report on Governance KPIs 2020/21. The report detailed that some of the KPIs had been partially achieved particularly in relation to the Governor Interaction Programme and Governor's representation at external events. The Clerk explained that this was due to the impact of the pandemic.

The Board noted the review of the 2020/21 Governance KPI's and Development Plan.

23. LETTER FROM ESFA DATED 22 SEPTEMBER 2021

DW presented the letter from ESFA to the Board and reassured Governors that the Executive Team would address the items contained within the letter.

The Board noted the letter from the ESFA dated 22 September 2021.

24. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

PN asked for feedback in relation to the blended approach to meetings; some papers being placed only on the portal and also stated that he hoped the decisions made at the meeting were in the interests of students and staff.

CM noted that although she had followed the meeting at times, she found it was difficult to hear particularly when Governors at the back of the room were speaking. SB agreed with CM and felt that another speaker was needed in the room. DW confirmed that his preference was face to face but appreciated the need to adapt and have a blended approach. PN agreed that Governors needed to retain the option to hold blended or virtual meetings. The Clerk agreed to resolve the speaker issues with IT.

KR
Nov 2021

PN noted that some Board papers were sent out via email and all were placed on the portal following feedback from some Governors asking for a reduction in paperwork. MSh stated that he felt it had worked. DW noted that all papers were available for Governors to have access to and read. KR suggested that she could highlight clearly on the agenda which papers were issued via email and which were on the portal which Governors agreed was a good idea.

KR
Nov 2021

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 16th November 2021 at 3.45pm (Meeting Room 1, North Street).