



THE WINDSOR FOREST COLLEGES GROUP CORPORATION BOARD OF GOVERNORS

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE CORPORATION OF THE WINDSOR FOREST COLLEGES GROUP

HELD VIA ZOOM ON WEDNESDAY, 19 MAY 2021

| PRESENT: | | <u>Meetings Attendance</u> |
|----------------|---|----------------------------|
| | Gillian May (Group Principal & Chief Executive) | (1 out of 1) |
| | Angela Wellings (Chair) | (4 out of 5) |
| | Peter Tyndale | (5 out of 5) |
| | Anthony Haines | (5 out of 5) |
| | Stuart Taylor | (3 out of 5) |
| | Tina Coates | (5 out of 5) |
| | Rob Lewis | (5 out of 5) |
| | Kiran Virdee | (4 out of 5) |
| | Nathan Garat | (4 out of 4) |
| | Tom Wainwright | (5 out of 5) |
| | Mobolaji Alabi (<i>until 7pm</i>) | (5 out of 5) |
| | Sam Foley (<i>from item 6 onwards</i>) | (1 out of 1) |
| | Paul Britton (<i>from item 6 onwards</i>) | (1 out of 1) |
| | Daljit Bains | (4 out of 5) |
| | Natalie Viola | (3 out of 5) |
| | Taha Hussain | (5 out of 5) |
| IN ATTENDANCE: | Graham Try | (Deputy CEO) |
| CLERK: | Lynn Payne | (5 out of 5) |

PART I

| <u>MINUTE NO.</u> | | <u>ACTION</u> |
|-------------------|---|---------------|
| | The meeting started at 6pm. | |
| 1. | <u>Health & Safety Housekeeping</u> | |
| | The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. | |
| 2. | <u>Apologies for Absence</u> | |
| | Apologies had been received from Student Governors Aimee Malynn & Jake Smith. | |
| 3. | <u>Declarations of Interest</u> | |
| | No Member declared any conflict of interest with the agenda. | |
| 4. | <u>Election of Vice Chair</u> | |
| | The Clerk advised Members that she had received several nominations from members for Kiran Virdee, as Vice Chair of the board. There had been no other nominations. As it was not a contested election, Kiran was not asked to leave the meeting. | |
| | Members unanimously approved the appointment of Kiran Virdee as Vice Chair of the Board. | |

| <u>MINUTE NO.</u> | <u>ACTION</u> |
|-----------------------|---|
| 5. | <p><u>Approval of Two New External Governors</u> The Chair of the Strategy, Governance & Search Committee, Tina Coates, advised Members that two new candidates had been interviewed, for the office of Governor. She detailed the skills the new applicants would bring to the governing body and advised members that the interview panel had been delighted with them. Members unanimously agreed to appoint Paul Britton and Sam Foley as new Governors.</p> <p><i>Sam Foley & Paul Britton joined the meeting.</i></p> <p>The Chair welcomed both Sam and Paul to the governing body, and introductions were made.</p> |
| 6. | <p><u>Minutes of the Previous Meetings held on 10 March 2021</u> The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 10 March 2021, having been previously circulated to members, were agreed as a true record and the Chair's electronic signature was applied. All Members were agreed.</p> |
| 7. | <p><u>Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Previous Meetings held on 10 March 2021</u> It was noted that there were no matters arising.</p> |
| 8. | <p><u>Group Principal's Report & College Headlines</u> Thai item was presented by the Group Principal. She informed Members of performance against high level targets. News from the Government currently awaited was with regard to the next phase of the reopening of the economy, and guidance on the requirements to socially distance. She confirmed the senior team was preparing for a further lifting of restrictions after the May half term, including for college provision that takes place in the community. Plans were underway for a 'return' to normal for the next academic year, but with the assurance of a robust plan B should it be required.</p> <p>The Group Principal informed members all programme areas had amended assessment plans and had taken the opportunity to identify units that would not be delivered this year, in accordance with advice & guidance from the relevant awarding bodies. She confirmed all assessments were in hand, in preparation for the submission of Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs) at the end of May.</p> <p>With regard to all students completing Level 4 courses, it was noted they were in College now for full face to face sessions and individual teams were making adjustments, where needed, to ensure students complete their course.</p> <p>With regard to adult courses, these had remained predominantly online with only ESOL returning to face to face teaching before the Easter break in preparation for exams. The Group Principal confirmed that all assessments were in hand with a combination of on demand exams and TAGs.</p> <p>Members asked about the post-16 capacity fund but the Group Principal advised she didn't think the College would be able to apply for that, as projects needed to be at either stage 2 or there would be a need to demonstrate demographic need. It was felt the college could not make a strong case for monies from this fund.</p> <p>With regard to the headline targets, the Group Principal advised members, as there was no in-year data yet, because of TAGs, that the College were doing predicted grades and TAGs would be done by the 21 June.</p> <p>She said indicative data would come back to the Board in July and the two College Principal's would come to that meeting.</p> <p>The report was noted.</p> |
| 9. | <p><u>Strategic Plan</u></p> |

a. Strategic Plan Update

This item was presented by the Group Principal. She updated Members on the College's 2020/21 Strategic Plan and Members were asked to approve the recommendation to undertake a detailed research phase to establish:-

- i) Current brand perceptions
- ii) Future options

The Group Principal asked colleagues whether they had any reflections on the Strategy Day. It was generally felt to have been very useful, in particular the process of dividing up into special groups for separate discussions.

The Group Principal spoke about the new working group being set up to design and approve the detail of the research on the College Group brand. There would be governor representation on the group.

Members agreed the recommendation to undertake a detailed research phase to establish the current brand perceptions and future options.

b. Risk Management Action Plan 2020/21

This item was presented by the Group Principal to advise the Board on the key risks in the Risk Management Action Plan. She reminded members that the annual updated Risk Register of all key risks, had been considered by the Board at its meeting in October 2020. The high risks were summarised in the reports, together with scoring definitions.

The summary of high risks reflected the College's key strategic priorities, including improving the quality of provision, maintaining strong financial health and ensuring the continued strength and success of the College.

Members noted the summary of high risks, in particular, the highest current risks, which were:-

- i) The College overspends 2020-21 Budget and /or fails to reduce the operating deficit in future years, thereby adversely impacting financial health.
- ii) Failure to implement the approved property strategy.
- iii) External colleges' funding and budgetary matters, including Brexit, future funding levels and the funding (or not) of pensions increases, risks the future financial sustainability of the College.
- iv) Inability to maintain and enhance the reputation of the College in order to retain and attract learners.
- v) Inability to recruit and retain high quality staff in all areas.
- vi) Severe disruption and adverse impacts on learners and College operations from the Coronavirus (COVID-19).
- vii) Failure to maintain the "Good" Ofsted rating and other inspection regime standards and continue to improve to "Outstanding".
- viii) Slough is a Tier 2 (Priority Area) area and therefore there is a heightened risk that learners may be vulnerable to harm and radicalisation.
- ix) Serious inaccuracy in funding claim following audit leads to reduction (clawback) in grant funding.

Members discussed the issues and noted the summary of the current position. There was a lengthy discussion on security at the Langley College campus and how this could be strengthened.

Members noted the action plan update and detailed report.

c. Quality Improvement Plan 2020/21

The Group Principal advised Members that this report would be brought to the Board meeting in July with the College Principals for curriculum and the Group Vice Principal Student Services adding in cross-College input.

The report was noted.

d. Enrolment Report

The Group Principal updated Members on the latest enrolment figures against all income streams. Members were reminded that the report was the current forecast of enrolment performance. For adult and apprentices enrolment continued throughout the year.

MINUTE
NO.

ACTION

The Group Principal advised Members that, at the time of reporting, 16-18 learner headcount across the College group was 2,597, which it was noted as 74 below the recorded number for this time last year. The reduction would lead to reduced funding in 2021/22.

Apprenticeship enrolments stood at 315, compared to 371 this time last year. The Group Principal advised Members that the interest in apprenticeships from employers was now starting to pick up, and the College was optimistic that it could achieve pre-pandemic levels for the next academic year.

With regard to adult enrolment for the current year, this was noted as 2,336. The Group Principal advised Members that the College's adult work was operating at approximately 70% of the ASB funding grant, with the resulting clawback being accounted for in the Management Accounts and the ESFA were aware of the position. Members were advised that the college was in the process of establishing a "restart programme" for community learners for June 2021.

Finally, higher education headcount numbers were noted at 94, against the planned target of 97. The decline from last year was due to consolidation of offer to ensure high quality and financially viable offer.

In relation to the process of converting applications to enrolments, members asked if there was an opportunity for students thinking of coming to the College in September to come onsite in the summer to see the facilities and at that time make applications and be accepted.

The Group Principal spoke about the plans for June, to bring students in, and confirmed that taster days were ongoing.

The report was noted.

10.

Safeguarding Update

Members had received a comprehensive update report on safeguarding work, with reference to the cases arising over the year to date. Members were advised of the safeguarding arrangements in place, in particular in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic. The monitoring and extra support for vulnerable students was outlined.

It was noted that students and staff received training on Safeguarding and Prevent and there was a safeguarding team at the College.

Members were advised of the current safeguarding referrals made, and it was noted there were many more cases being raised by external agencies and multi-agency workers at the College. Members were updated on the students who were 'in need', being students in care or on child protection plans and advised on what was being done to monitor these children.

In relation to the duty to support the reduction of serious violent crime, members were informed that there was likely to be primary legislation forthcoming shortly, designed to improve the effectiveness of the current multi agency approach to preventing/tackling serious violence. The Group Principal informed members that the Director of Safeguarding and the Group Vice Principal Student Services were already in early discussions with partners from Slough Borough Council and the Police, to discuss ways in which parties could share early data more systematically.

Members discussed the safeguarding update at length. The Group Principal informed Members that staff were getting better at raising concerns.

The report was noted.

11.

Reports from the Quality & Curriculum Committee

- a. Draft Minutes of the Quality & Curriculum Committee Meeting of 17 March 2021 and oral Report from the Chair

Members noted the draft minutes of the meeting of 17 March 2021. The Chair updated Members on the work of the Committee this term.

| <u>MINUTE NO.</u> | <u>ACTION</u> |
|-----------------------|--|
| | i. <u>To note the Minutes and make recommendations</u> There were no recommendations referred to the Board. |
| 12. | <p><u>Reports from the Resources Committee</u></p> <p>a. <u>Draft Minutes of the Resources Committee Meetings of 3 March 2021 & 5 May 2021 and oral Report from the Chair</u> Members noted the draft minutes of the meetings of 3 March 2021 & 5 May 2021. The Chair of the Committee outlined the work of the Committee over the course of this term.</p> <p>i. <u>To note the Minutes and make recommendations</u> It was noted that all recommendations referred to the Board would be considered in separate agenda items.</p> <p>b. <u>Fees Policy</u> Members noted the Fees Policy recommended from the Resources Committee for approval. Members unanimously approved the Fees Policy.</p> <p>c. <u>Period 8 Management Accounts</u> Members noted the Management Accounts and the Deputy CEO advised Members there was very little change in the forecast deficit of £1.418 million. The Management Accounts were similar to the Period 7 accounts. Members noted the report.</p> <p>d. <u>GDPR Annual Report</u> Members noted the annual report on GDPR 2021 from the Group Director of Information & Business Systems Technology, presented by the Deputy CEO. The report was to provide assurance to Members that the College Group was fully compliant with the current General Data Protection (GDPR) legislation and to update Members on GDPR matters dealt with during the last year. The report demonstrated the College group was meeting its legal requirements with regards to GDPR and its ongoing commitment to data protection as an organisational priority. Members noted the report.</p> <p>e. <u>Health & Safety Summer Term Report 2020/21</u> Members were advised of the health & safety performance this term, in particular the safety arrangements with regard to the Covid-19 lateral flow testing. There was also a report on safety training and Members were advised that since the start of this academic year there had been 14 reported accidents or incidents. The report was noted.</p> |
| 13. | <p><u>Governance</u></p> <p>a. <u>Corporation Business</u> The Clerk presented her report, which was noted. The key matters for approval had already been considered, or would be considered within the Part II agenda in the recommendations from the Strategy, Governance & Search Committee. The report was noted.</p> <p>b. <u>Approval of Application of Seal</u> The Deputy CEO confirmed that, since the last meeting, the Corporation Seal has been applied to the Agreement for Works at Strode's College Lane. It was also noted that, in accordance with the timeline in the legal documents for Strode's College Lane, that were approved by the Board on 10th March, the Corporation seal would be applied in the near future to the Deed of Grant and the Supplementary Lease. The report was noted.</p> |
| 14. | <p><u>Review of Decisions taken at the meeting and proposals for communication.</u> This item was presented by the Group Principal, who informed members that the decisions and discussions of the meeting, would be communicated in the normal way.</p> |

| <u>MINUTE NO.</u> | | <u>ACTION</u> |
|-----------------------|--|---------------|
| 15. | <u>Evaluation of Meeting</u> Members were pleased to complete an evaluation of the meeting, highlighting where they felt they had added value and made appropriate challenge. | |
| 16. | <u>Dates and Times of Future Meetings and Events</u> The dates and times of future meetings were noted. Scheduled for 4.30 pm on: Wednesday, 7 July 2021 | |
| 17. | <u>Any Urgent Business</u> There were no other items of urgent business raised. | |
| | The meeting ended at 7.15pm. | |

EVALUATION OF THE MEETING BY MEMBERS

Key evaluation points from the meeting where Governors felt they provided appropriate challenge & added value:

- Length of the meeting was about right
- Length of agenda items: The time spent on each agenda item was appropriate to inform the Board's decisions and recommendations.
- The structure of the papers was easy to follow.
- The papers were clear and the information to support the decision making was fully complete.

EXTRA VALUE

At this meeting there was a lengthy and comprehensive discussion on safeguarding, risk management and, in particular, concerns about the security at the Langley College campus.

At this stage of the meeting it was agreed by all members present that matters of a private and confidential nature were to be discussed and had there been any members of the public present they would have been asked to leave the meeting.