



Minutes of the electronic Corporation meeting held at 1700hrs on 4 February 2021.

Present	Guy Ainsley	Phil Berry	Irina Kendix	Richard Lewis
	Matt Luheshi	Chris Nicholls	Will Phipps	Ben Stapleton
	Paul Thompson	Phil Thompson (Chair)	Alberto Ucci	David York
In Attendance	Ralph Devereux (Clerk)	Gary Dixon (DPQ)	Cath Gunn (Principal, Barnfield)	Nattalie Kempt (Head (EAM))(37-39 only)
	Sarah Knowles (DP (P&D))	Eamonn McCarroll (DoF)	Louise Barden (Principal's PA)	
Apologies	Jason Smith	Tammy Nuthall (DP, Barnfield)		

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

PART ONE

37/20 ELIGIBILITY, QUORUM, DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

- a. The apologies were approved. No notice had been received of any Member becoming ineligible to hold office, the meeting was quorate and there had been no interests declared.
- b. Electronic meetings were confirmed as compliant with Standing Orders (SO); members had submitted questions in advance and these would be addressed at the relevant stage of the agenda. The meeting format was explained and agreed. **(Action 1)**

38/20 STANDING ITEMS

- a. The Minutes (Part 1&2) of the meeting held on 9 December 2020 were then confirmed for electronic signature; the Clerk to Action. **(Action 2)**
- b. Matters Arising. There were no matters arising.
- c. Outstanding Actions. All actions from the last meetings were considered and discussed; it was agreed that all had been implemented or were in progress.

See referenced minute for full detail.		Resp	Date
Action 1	26/20b. Meeting format agreed.	Chair	wie
Action 2	27/20a. Last minutes (11.11.20) confirmed.	Clerk	
Action 3	27/20b. IAS to continue for 2021.22	DoF	
Action 4	28/20g. Post FE White Paper strategy day.	Chair	asap
Action 5	29/20b. Members welcome to virtual lesson observations.	DPQ	wie
Action 6	30/20a. RM Policy approved.	DoF	
Action 7	30/20c. RR approved.		

- d. Matters arising. There were no matters arising from the minutes.
- e. Urgent Business. There was no urgent business requested.

**The information was received and noted.
Actions had been identified. (Register 46/20 below)**

39/20 DEPARTMENTAL PRESENTATION

English and Maths (EAM) A sophisticated, effective and comprehensive software, "Century" had recently been introduced to support EAM provision; the package was designed for individual students to work individually and at their own speed. The capabilities were explained through an interactive electronic demonstration and narrative from the Head of EAM. Century provided the teacher with the capability to identify areas in which individual students required additional support, to identify student misunderstandings and allowed personalisation of the content for each user. The package also allowed managers to monitor progress through a range of comparative presentations and included a facility for the student to self-track progress and allowed parents or carers to monitor development. Practical use of the software was then demonstrated to the meeting:

- a. from the students' and teachers' viewpoint the work was based around "nuggets" individual learning elements, which were immediately and automatically marked allowing student and teacher real time information on progress and to inform updates, this allowed students to work at their own rate as and when they chose;
- b. the teachers' dashboard presented individual or group performance and informed and facilitated interventions;
- c. managers could overview performance and engagement by student, class or subject;

Use of Century was welcome in the present on-line environment and would be a positive addition to capability in a more blended learning situation. For example, students who were perhaps withdrawn about asking question in live classes could happily and privately work in Century: a constructive addition and a valuable package. Students developed skills and knowledge on Century, which was then applied to the 'GCSE' questions working with their EAM teachers. It had potential to break down barriers in learning and increase individual motivation. It was interesting that >350 students had accessed Century during the Christmas break. Members noted and welcomed the information and thanked the Head of EAM for her presentation and she left the meeting.

**The Information was received and noted.
Nattalie Kempt left the meeting.**

40/20 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The Principal's report included the Performance Dashboard, which was considered. Attendance at both WHC and Barnfield College (BC) was "amber" and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) Adult Education Budget (AEB) was also noted "amber" at 56% together with Engagement. All had been adversely affected by the Covid arrangements, which were outlined in the paper and noted. The Paper had been circulated well in advance of the meeting and was generally taken as read. All funding streams were moving forward and the introduction of Lateral Flow Testing (LFT) had been achieved effectively across the Group. The Further Education (FE) White Paper had now been published, the key proposals were explained in the paper and would form the basis for a Strategic Planning Day tbc later in the year; T Levels appeared to remain as unchanged. Industrial placements had been particularly affected during the lockdown and the employer-liaison team was maintaining contact with current employers and also attempting links with new employers. In the absence of Placements and Work Experience, a broad range of alternative employer-led activities such as, Industry Masterclasses and podcasts had been made available. In terms of "technology challenged" households the distribution of online devices continued, the difficulties associated with homes with sibling students and possibly home working adults, were fully accepted; 428 devices and 21 dongles had been distributed. All students, particularly those 'at risk' were contacted regularly to be updated on available technology and other support. Uncertainties over the current year examination assessments would continue until Ofqual published their intentions. To prepare and as a contingency, occupational courses had front loaded practical assessments at the start of the academic year, vocational courses and EAM qualifications, students completed internally set assessments in preparation for their formal assessment after lockdown. Current dissatisfaction

amongst Higher Education (HE) students with lecturing and accommodation fees did not appear to have migrated to WHC and there had been no complaints or refund requests as yet, however some must be expected from those requiring access to practical environments such as laboratories. As mentioned at the last meeting new courses had been introduced full detail was discussed. The AEB had been briefly considered earlier and the clawback position was further explained. Historically the clawback threshold had been 97%; because of Covid this had been relaxed last year to 68%. The current ESFA contract was for 97%, however that may again be reduced. If the 97% remained, then clawback of c£458 was the worst case but if even set to 90% there would be no shortfall.

The information was received and noted.

Actions had been identified. (Register 46/20 below)

41/20 MONITORING

- a. Subcontracting. The ESFA is planning to cap the volume of subcontracting across the sector, driven by concerns over quality, relevance of provision and value for money (VFM). Strengthened rules and a quality standard may be introduced. Post-merger the Group has been reducing activity to strict parameters with an eventual target of no more than 1% of total income being subcontracted to other providers; Members should remain assured that the present robust monitoring and quality arrangements had revealed no concerns. Volumes of subcontracting varied considerably across the sector. In the East of England, from 24 providers, 13 subcontracted to c£18m, of that, £15m passed to the contractor with the remaining £3m retained by the lead providers. For example, other Herts Colleges subcontract c10% of total income, which compared with WHC current 4% and Bedford College at just 1%. At WHC the student enrolment process was transparent; although application and enrolment was undertaken by the subcontractor, students understood themselves as WHC students with full access to services and facilities. Close liaison was maintained with the subcontractors and WHC retained quality oversight from sign-up to certification. During considerations it was queried whether WHC could act as a subcontractor; in the past WHC had delivered the Non-Vocational Qualification (NVQ) element of an apprenticeship in Motor Vehicle (MV) for students enrolled with North London Garages. "Free to Learn" (F2L) provision remained an important part of future plans, but this would require accessing specific community groups and hard to reach local people, F2L were skilled and experienced at that and it may be that provision should remain in the 1% final target.
- b. Complaints and Compliments. Stakeholder feedback, was important and valued to inform continuous improvement and simple and convenient processes to share were explained on the website, together with relevant Policies and related internal processes. This was the first consolidated report for some years and had been prompted by the current challenging environment. It would now be an annual submission containing comparative detail from across the sector and former reports. Full consideration of Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) issues would fall to the newly established EDI Committee, whose wide cross Group membership would be supported by accredited external professionals; that Committee was scheduled for Internal Audit Service (IAS) scrutiny in the current year. This report, which examined detail since March 2020, the most intensive period for Covid related disruption, examined a total of 53 complaints, with no common themes or patterns and only one had failed complete resolution. No complaints had been passed to external agencies. The Director of Quality is responsible for administration of all complaints. The detail did not contain information re compliments; these were received from many sources and a distilled, sensitive presentation would be developed.

The information was received and noted.

Actions had been identified. (Register 46/20 below)

42/20 MEMBERS

There had been no visits or learning walks for Covid related reasons.

43/20 SAFEGUARDING

The nominated Safeguarding Member, Matt Luheshi gave a verbal update on current issues. Since the last Corporation Matt had held two productive meetings with the safeguarding teams, where present challenges were discussed. One item of particular note was recognition that all vulnerable students had been contacted individually over the Christmas period by staff. The Free School Meal (FSM) arrangements supplemented by the Learner Support Fund (LSF) continued to support as necessary, increase in demand for the latter was noted. On-Line safety continued to receive particular attention.

The information was received.

44/20 URGENT BUSINESS

There had been no urgent business requested.

45/20 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be at 1700 on 10 March 2021.

46/20 ACTION REGISTER

See referenced minute for full detail.		Resp	Date
Action 1	37/20b. Meeting format agreed	Chair	wie
Action 2	38/20a. Last minutes (09.12.20) confirmed for signature.	Clerk	

Ralph Devereux (Clerk) for Phil Thompson (Chair)

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Final Audit Report

2021-03-12

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