

Minutes of the electronic Corporation meeting held at 1700hrs on 12 May 2021.

Present	Phil Berry	Irina Kendix	Richard Lewis	Matt Luheshi
	Chris Nicholls	Ben Stapleton	Jason Smith	Phil Thompson (Chair)
	Alberto Ucci	Gill Worgan (Principal)		
In Attendance	Ralph Devereux (Clerk)	Gary Dixon (DPQ)	Cath Gunn (Principal, Barnfield)	Sarah Knowles (DP (P&D))
	Tammy Nuthall (DP, Barnfield)	Eamonn McCarroll (DoF)	Louise Barden (Principal's PA)	
Apologies	Guy Ainsley	Paul Thompson		

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

PART ONE

67/20 ELIGIBILITY, QUORUM, DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

The apologies were accepted. No notice had been received of any Member becoming ineligible to hold office, the meeting was quorate and there had been no interests declared.

68/20 STANDING ITEMS

- a. The Minutes (Part 1&2) of the meeting held on 10 March and the special meeting held on 22 April 2021 were confirmed for electronic signature; the Clerk to Action. **(Action 1)**
- 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.

10.03.21. See referenced minute for full detail.		Status
Action 1	50/20b. Meeting format agreed	Complete
Action 2	51/20a. Last minutes (04.02.21) confirmed for signature.	
Action 3	51/20b. AC recommendations approved.	
Action 4	51/20c. S&G recommendations approved.(CN,PT,BS)	
Action 5	54/20. Estates Strategy approved.	

22.04.21. See referenced minute for full detail.		
Action 1	61/20a. Meeting format agreed.	Progressing
	63/20a. Progress C&E Campus to design stage 3 at a budget of £812k,	
Action 2	63/60b. Application to FECTF approved,	
Action 3	63/60c. Progress sports hall to design stage 3 at a budget of £155k.	
Action 4	63/60d. Progress sale of EW campus.	
Action 5	63/60e. Application to TLevel Capital Fund approve.	

- 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 75/20 below)**

69/20 TOGETHER TRAINING (TT) (OUT OF AGENDA ORDER)

The TT Managing Director (MD) delivered an interactive electronic presentation on the current situation, introduced by a brief explanation of the background to establishment of the Company to inform the newer Corporation Members. The joint venture with Oaklands College continued to make sound progress and had grown from 100 students on start-up 3 years ago to the cautious target of 230 this year; employers using TT included large national companies, such as: "Camelot" (the national lottery organisation); "Booking.com"; "ASOS" (on-line shopping) and the NHS. Apprentices continued to receive training on-line with individual additional coaching and mentoring as necessary and the 20% "off-the-job" requirement was being flexibly achieved under direction of the Learning Coaches. Progress reviews, including targets and improvement guidance also continued on-line in common with "End Point" assessments. Face to face delivery, particularly for those who required examinations and workshop access had been resumed on 8 March with many other learners opting to continue "on-line" at least until term end. Enrolment numbers were above expectation with 100 applications to date and an expectation of a further 30, which had increased the financial forecast annual surplus from £100k to £140k. The Performance Dashboard was all "Amber" or "Green", although retention had been affected by Covid related redundancy issues. The growth from 100 to 230 students in 3 years had been professionally managed and impressive, further growth resulting from the "Skills for Jobs" White Paper initiatives and the national £2.5b "Levy" budget, was likely and a national rollout of on-line provision was even possible. During general discussions, the invitation to join the multi-agency Safeguarding Apprenticeship trailblazer group was noted and welcomed. Development of bespoke packages with individual employers and personal contact was an important element of the management ethos and had contributed to the current achievements. Levy arrangements included the facility for employers to "feedback" and inform other user agencies; TT was consistently commended. Enhancement of the excellent development of on-line delivery and processes provided great opportunity to roll out a mixed portfolio of packages; as already suggested perhaps nationwide. An increased demand for cross and upskilling was expected and training for the NHS, which had been suspended for over 12 months would be re-introduced. There was large proportion of Levy payers that did not use the facility, for some there was no suitable offer in the 700+ apprenticeship standards. Members thanked the MD for the information and the clear presentation.

The information was received and noted.

70/20 PRINCIPALS REPORT

- a. Performance. The Report included detail of the Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Dashboard, the colour coded performance monitoring criteria were fully considered and related issues were discussed. The Adult Education Budget (AEB) clawback threshold had now been published at 90%, which would be managed within existing financial arrangements.
- b. Students. Covid Lateral Flow testing had moved from campus to voluntary home completion, results were returned to College and were recorded. A Dfe refund to the College for testing related expenditure of c£35k was expected. Travel cost for students was an increasing challenge, the College Bursary Fund provided some support and the total amount available may be increased. Negotiations were ongoing with Arriva buses regarding student discounts.
- c. "Everyone's Invited". The recently raised profile of sexual abuse matters and the arrival of the associated "Everyone's Invited" website had led to a contingency review of cross-college and sub-contractor Safeguarding arrangements, there were no entries relating to WHC or BC. Ofsted would now start to complete associated reviews and the Office for Students (OfS) had issued additional related guidance.
- d. Skills Accelerator. The White Paper (Skills for Jobs) established the Skills Accelerator programme, to reshape local labour markets through employer representative boards across agreed geographical areas. To be achieved through "Local Skills Improvement Plan" (LSIP) trailblazers and Strategic Development Fund (SDF) pilots; WHC was strongly supportive of these vital initiatives. The LSIPs would be piloted in 6-8 areas, led by employer representative bodies and funding was available. The SDF pilots aimed to test viability of change in skills delivery to meet local needs, and were aligned with the LSIP. WHC would lead 2 bids for SDF:
 - (i) the "Hertfordshire bid" aligned to a LSIP currently under development by Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (HLEP) and involving Employer Representative Bodies (ERB); the Herts Chamber would be the lead organisation; and

- (ii) the “M1 South” bid to be submitted by 25 May 2021. This bid is less advanced than the above since the South East Midlands LEP (SEMLEP), as a younger agency, is less well established than HLEP.

The pressure of work was heavy and required concentrated team-work, professionalism and commitment. Some additional short-term and well-qualified support was helping with the additional workload. If successful, the positive impacts could include developing and sharing of curriculum content and sector-specific employer 'strategic' advisory boards. It was hoped that some cross county border initiatives would emerge in future.

- e. The University of Hertfordshire (UoH) had been successful in the initial stage of application to establish an Institute of Technology (IoT), which would deliver Higher Education (HE) in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Preference was often given to newly constructed large and impressive dedicated facilities but this bid assumed dispersed delivery across the UoH and the 4 county colleges (BC would not be involved it is for Herts only) largely delivered from existing premises; all, (temporarily excepting Oaklands) would be fully involved in development of a possible second stage submission and if viable, a full business case would be presented to the Corporation for consideration. **(Action 2)** Shortlisted applicants would be interviewed and the outcome announced in the autumn. Each college would deliver all aspects of the IoT curriculum, but the student numbers would attribute to the IoT; this would justify the initial investment. There would be no effect on WHC Level 4&5 provision and the partnership with UoH could engender additional benefit. The business model would be a Joint Venture (JV) between all participants with a specific governance model; in a similar manner as TT. The exact model would be put together by professional legal agencies with the overriding caveat that there would be no responsibility for other partners' liabilities. Benefits must outweigh Risk.
- f. Cyber Security. The risk of serious and aggressive cyber-security incidents in educational establishments had increased since late February 2021, with several ransomware attacks, some of which had been successful. Accordingly, a practice meeting using Major Incident Procedures had been held to inform development of protective, contingency and post-incident recovery procedures. Key lessons and actions included: leadership incident WhatsApp group established; review and update of emergency contact list; continuing security awareness training for staff and students; development of offline plans essential services and more. Backup arrangements had been considerably enhanced and further enhancement was to be installed this week (an “immutable infrastructure”). External specialist advice had been sought to supplement internal expertise and the College was working closely with JISC (internet provider) and the College insurance agency; access was also available to the National Cyber Security Centre. Despite the comprehensive protective environment this was a constantly evolving criminal environment and continual updating was necessary. Additionally, regular and comprehensive cross-group training and evaluation exercises were necessary.
- g. Capital Project. The decision at the last Corporation meeting prompted progression of BC Phase 2 and Phase 3 proposals for planning. The latest activity is the formal appointment of the Professional Team, which is underway and on track. The Stage 1 grant submission to the transformation fund was submitted in March for a decision by the end of May. If progressing to stage 2, the application will be required by the end of July, and the outcome will be known by the end of September 21.
- h. Student Achievement:
 - (i) Mohammed Ahmed, a L2 plumbing student at BC is a finalist in the Screwfix Trade Apprentice of the Year competition;
 - (ii) BC has won the award “Bodyshop Education Provider of the year and Sergiu Lonescu a technician in the BC Motor Vehicle was awarded the under 30 “rising star”; and
 - (iii) Lucy Dillon and Enid Baroni from the Professional Chef's course at WHC had reached the semi-final of the Nestle Torque D'Or Hospitality competition.

Congratulations were recorded to all. **(Action 3)**

The information was received and noted.

Actions had been identified. (Register 75/20 below)

71/20 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT

The Report opened with the Public Value Statement and the community engagement key aims to refresh Members on the underlying culture; it then outlined the recent White Paper and the Strategic Plan 2018.21, which would soon be refreshed together with a review of the Community Engagement Strategy. The report detailed the current key community engagement activities with partners across local and regional areas and provided developing information which would inform the next strategic phase beyond 2021. The paper was then generally considered and discussed. Various regional skills priorities had been raised (page 11) and it was explained that Life Sciences were niche areas of employment and WHC provided a route for students to HEI (HE Institutions) who would access higher-level qualifications. It may be helpful to categorise information for example as; mission critical, important for business delivery and community relations/local public benefit and it was explained that all engagement in the paper was high priority but future reports would include some categorisation. **(Action 4)** Looking at the “new initiatives”, there was no surge in cross sector in adult enrolments but the new “Lifetime guarantee” launched in April may change that, however complexities and rules continued to make upskilling difficult for adults. Some initiatives had more potential such as the Skills Accelerator, considered in the last item, which was the first step towards co-ordination with agencies to identify skills gaps and shortages and then to agree regionally how they should be filled. Work with local agencies, such as the Herts Innovation Quarter Network could provide meaningful opportunities, that route led to the excellent collaboration with BRE and Stewart Milne Timber. Looking to raise profiles, some ex WHC students, now business owners gave some support but experience showed that generally FE College Alumni provide little active assistance. However increased co-operation and attention to the Luton Secondary Heads’ Forum had generated an increased application rate in Luton including “first choice” options and collaboration with SEMLEP was proving fruitful. Although reduced through Covid associated restrictions participation in community events by students had largely not been possible.

The information was received and noted.

Actions had been identified. (Register 75/20 below)

72/20 MEMBERS

- a. Irina Kendix term of office would end on 12.06.21 and it was unanimously agreed to reappoint for a further term. **(Action 5)**
- b. There had been no visits or learning walks for Covid related reasons.
- c. Safeguarding. The Safeguarding Nominee Matt Luheshi updated the meeting on outcomes from his recent meeting with the Safeguarding Committee. He explained one instance from each of three categories:
 - (i) student with medical support needs; a student had suffered a fatal incident away from College, a notifiable incident to Ofsted. All processes for students in need of medical support were fully compliant with requirements.
 - (ii) “Everyone’s Invited”, the recent media coverage of the fallout from Dulwich College had focused attention on availability of reporting processes and a button had been added to landing pages of associated webpages. Procedures had been assured as robust.
 - (iii) Sub-contractors’ standards, there had additionally been media coverage on standards at sub-contractors. WHC due diligence prior to appointment was robust and to obtain assurance on continuing compliance, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) would be present at all monitoring processes.

The information was received and noted.

Actions had been identified. (Register 75/20 below)

73/20 URGENT BUSINESS

There had been no urgent business requested.

74/20 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be at 1700 on 9 June 2021.

75/20 ACTION REGISTER

See referenced minute for full detail.		Resp	Date
Action 1	68/20a. Last Minutes (10.03.21 & 22.04.21) confirmed.	Clerk	wie
Action 2	70/20e. Part 2 IoT bid to be presented for consideration.	Chair	asap
Action 3	70/20h. Congratulations to awarded students.		wie
Action 4	71/20. Information to be prioritised in future reports.	Chair	wie
Action 5	72/20a. IK re-appointed to Corporation.	Clerk	12.06.21

Ralph Devereux (Clerk) for Phil Thompson (Chair)

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Final Audit Report

2021-06-14

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