



Minutes of the Corporation meeting held at the Watford Campus at 1700hrs on 14 July 2021.

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

The Chair welcomed all to the face to face meeting, the first for a long time.

PART ONE

89/20 ELIGIBILITY, QUORUM,

The apology was 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.

90/20 STANDING ITEMS

- a. The Minutes (Part 1&2) of the meeting held on 9 June 2021 were confirmed for electronic signature; the Clerk to Action. **(Action 1)**
- b. The unconfirmed Minutes of the Audit Committee (AC) meeting held on 23 February 2021 were presented by the Committee Chair, the External Audit Plan and fee had been recommended to the Corporation and they were approved. **(Action 2)** Attendance of the External Auditor to present the Annual Financial Statement (AFS) to the Corporation had been discussed (33/20) and the suggested approach was endorsed.
- c. Matters Arising. There were no matters arising.
- d. 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.		Status
Action 1	79/20a. Last Minutes (12.05.21) confirmed.	Completed
Action 2	80/20b. Refurbishment of EW discounted.	
Action 3	81/20f. Members encouraged to participate in SAR	

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

The information was received and noted.

Actions had been identified. (Register 100/20 below)

91/20 PRINCIPALS REPORT

The Reports had been circulated well in advance of the meeting.

- a. Performance. The Report included detail of the Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Dashboard, the colour coded performance monitoring criteria were fully considered and discussed. The attendance criteria would be amended for 2021/22 and would monitor specific groups' attendance rather than the current collective/top level statistic.
- b. Covid. For the coming year, the Group would continue to complete full Risk Assessments (RA) to implement and react to changes in official guidance; the administration had responded well to changing circumstances and guidance throughout the Pandemic and this would continue.
- c. Adult Education Budget AEB). The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) had finally relaxed the firm approach to AEB shortfall and clawback should the 90% threshold not be achieved. Colleges were now required to submit a business case to avoid clawback (£314k) incurred by external pressures; the timing was tight but achievable, with only a few weeks to comply.
- d. College Transformation Fund (CTF). Members were reminded that the bidding process for CTF funding was in two stages: the first evidencing how the project would support reforms to the FE sector and maximise space utilisation and the second a more detailed evaluation of the plan, costings, affordability, and deliverability. Confirmation had now been received that the first application had successfully moved to the second stage and a further and more detailed submission was required by 8 October 2021; to comply with Stage 2 requirements the project cost needed a 10% reduction. Grant funding will be capped at £20m. Members welcomed the information and noted the "deliverability" criterion included in many funding invitations; accordingly, elements of the capital strategy would be brought to anticipatory "shovel ready" status.

The information was received and noted.

92/20 HUMAN RESOURCES (HR) ANNUAL REPORT

The annual HR report was considered and discussed. The team comprised appropriately qualified members complemented by external specialist support as and when required. Policies were reviewed regularly to ensure relevance to strategy. Members were reminded of earlier considerations of the antisemitism definition: The Association of Colleges (AoC) had now recommended an appropriate wording, which had been incorporated into relevant employee and student documentation and policies. Personal information was collected sensitively and stored securely and new processes to ensure fair and even-handed treatment of employees had been developed. Introduction of Group salary scales had been completed although a small number of employees (76 / 8%) remain on the predecessor Barnfield College (BC) Contracts of Employment, these would recede through natural wastage and when incremental pay scales had been maximised. Effective succession planning contributing to the low turnover rate and recruitment processes including effective "on-boarding" were regularly reviewed. Effective Performance Management (PM) was noted, particularly the notable reduction at BC. Gender pay, equality and diversity and wellbeing remained a high priority. Continuous Professional Development (CPD) was effective and the formal individual allocation of c£165 was supplemented from other inputs, for example the c£100k apprenticeship levy on substantial qualifications such as MBA, on Leadership, management and teaching and specific training posts such as Teaching and Learning (T&L) Leaders and Digital Champions. A wide range of mandatory training was completed, and full details were noted; in response to a question, it was confirmed that 84% had completed Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion and 94% had completed the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) training. A full audit of the EDI environment had been completed and a full analysis would be brought to the next meeting. **(Action 3)** Implementation of "Covid" home-working and well-being policies had helped those working from home to do so safely, efficiently and effectively throughout the lockdowns. Working from home would continue as an option in specific instances and after full individual evaluation, but staff fully recognised that student-facing roles could not be undertaken remotely to comply with the value "to ensure students are at the heart of all decision-making". Managers were able to input to current working practices by responding to 'prompt' questions to ensure consistency in analysis; discussions and outcomes were recorded on the College's electronic system, which was monitored by HR. During general discussion members felt that it would be helpful to see

some wider information on, and including a comparison against, last year's protected characteristics and by Department; that would be included in future reports. **(Action 4)**

The information was received and noted.

Actions had been identified. (Register 100/20 below)

93/20 SUBCONTRACTOR FEES & CHARGES POLICY (SCFCP)

The SCFCP and the Subcontract Plan for 2019-23 were presented and discussed:

- a. Policy. The Policy had been updated to current ESFA requirements, the draft and marked up version was at Annex 1 and the clean version at Annex 2; the Policy was approved. **(Action 5)**
- b. The ESFA required a full subcontracting reduction in volume (with the total value limit of 25% of income) within 3 years from 2019.20, full detail of the plan and associated costings had been tabulated and it was noted that volumes from 2021.22 were fully compliant.

The information was received and noted.

Actions had been identified. (Register 100/20 below)

94/20 RISK REGISTER (RR)

Risk Register (RR). The RR had been updated as required by the current Risk Management (RM) Policy and the full revised version had been scrutinised and discussed by the AC. The latest version of the High Level register, recently updated by individual risk owners, was at Appendix 1 and was discussed. Since the last review;

- a. no risks had been added; and
- b. 3 risks had been removed, each fully explained in the Report; there were 7 high-level risks remaining on the Register.

The Register was then discussed:

- c. re 3.13. Students. Continuation of risk 3.13 would be considered at the next RR update meeting;
- d. re 5.2. Nursery. The original closure date in April 20 July had been extended to 20 July to cater for the small number of children who will enter school in September;
- e. re 10.4. Cyber security. Cyber security was considered in particular; a desktop exercise had recently been completed involving the College Leadership Group (CLG), which had informed a comprehensive "post-incident" contingency plan. The National Cyber Security Centre (NSCC) training plan had been rolled out for all staff from May, 85% had completed and all staff would have completed by the end of term. The DP(P&D) explained the improvements that were currently in progress:
 - (i) backup (immutable) security;
 - (ii) multi factor user identification; and
 - (iii) staff training.

Since Jan 21, Patches and critical updates were automatically applied overnight once released and this process applied to all 250 servers. It was agreed that more detailed information on "Cyber Essentials" a simple but effective, Government backed scheme to help protect against a whole range of the most common cyber-attacks would be completed by the AC and circulated to all Members. **(Action 6)** Assurance was sought and received that the current insurance package included this area.

The information was received and noted.

Actions had been identified. (Register 100/20 below)

95/20 PROPERTY STRATEGY

The College Estates Strategy, approved in March 2021 (minute 54/20) had been informed and driven by the Strategic Plan 2018.21, which recognised the importance of delivering education and training in fully fit for purpose environments. The Estates Strategy had identified 2 areas for development:

- a. Block D&J at the Hemel Hempstead (HH) campus; and
- b. expansion space at the Watford campus.

In March 2020, the Government had pledged £1.5b to support colleges develop and improve their estates and individual funding invitations for capital projects that were available at short notice were periodically on offer. (See Principal's Report 91/20d) Currently progressing was allocation of £120m for 8 Institutes of Technology (IoT) and the college could receive c£7m towards redevelopment of Block D&J if the application to establish an IoT in Hertfordshire is successful. It was vital that preparation work for this project should advance to RIBA Stage 3 together with relevant planning permissions and similarly, work should progress at Watford to RIBA Stage 1; approval was sought for £625k and £50k respectively; full cost had not yet been determined. There was general discussion and consideration; should the IoT application not be successful the expenditure would not be nugatory since the planning permissions would remain extant for 3 years and would reinforce future applications for yet unannounced capital availability, which would also run for the 3-year period. The expenditure would initially rest with the college, however if the IoT or an alternative funding route is successful, the costs would be included in the overall costs of the project and funded accordingly. It was clear that the opportunity to maximise the possibility of success in these capital bidding rounds could not be allowed to pass and the necessary funding:

- c. a budget of £625k to progress the construction of a new building to replace Block D&J (HH Campus) to RIBA Stage 3 Design and Panning; and
- d. a budget of £50k to complete RIBA Stage 1 report that includes feasibility studies, surveys and initial cost appraisals for the delivery of expansion space at the Watford campus (3rd floor infill)

was unanimously approved. **(Action 7)**

The information was received and noted.

Actions had been identified. (Register 100/20 below)

96/20 GOVERNANCE

- a. Meeting Schedule. The final version of the meeting schedule including start times and location was considered and approved. **(Action 8)**
- b. End of Terms. Three Members terms of office had ended on 11 July.
 - (i) Guy Ainslie;
 - (ii) Richard Lewis; and
 - (iii) Matt Luheshi

All remained eligible for reconsideration and were unanimously reappointed for 2 year wef 11 July 2021. **(Action 9)**

The information was received and noted.

Actions had been identified. (Register 100/20 below)

97/20 MEMBERS

Guy Ainslie had been scheduled to update Members on the Capital Project Steering Group (CPSG); however, he had given short notice apologies for this meeting and the information would be delivered at the next meeting. **(Action 10)**

The information was received and noted.

Actions had been identified. (Register 100/20 below)

98/20 URGENT BUSINESS

There had been no urgent business requested.

99/20 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be at 1700 on 13 October 2021.

100/20 ACTION REGISTER

See referenced minute for full detail.		Resp	Date
Action 1	90/20a. Last Minutes (09.06.21) confirmed.	Clerk	wie
Action 2	90/20b. External Audit Plan and Fee approved.	DoF	
Action 3	92/20. Analysis of EDI audit to next meeting.	GW	13.10.21
Action 4	92/20. Protected Characteristics info in future reports.		
Action 5	93/20a. SCFCP approved.	DoF	wie
Action 6	94/20. Information on Cyber Essentials to all Members.	DPPD	
Action 7	95/20. Funding to progress capital works approved.	GW	
Action 8	96/20a. Meeting schedule agreed.	Chair	
Action 9	96/20b. GA, RL & ML re-appointed as Members	Clerk	12.07.21
Action 10	97/20. CPSG Update to Next Meeting.	GA	wie

Phil Thompson

19-Oct-21

Phil Thompson

Mr