

## Corporation Board Meeting

Wednesday 9 February 2022

Boardroom - Watford

5pm – 6.55pm

### MINUTES

**Attendees:** (v = virtual attendance)

<b>Governors</b>	<b>Role:</b>	<b>Other Attendees</b>	<b>Role</b>
Phil Thompson	General - Chair of Corporation	Gary Dixon	Deputy Principal West Herts
Gill Worgan	Principal & CEO	Cath Gunn	Principal of Barnfield College
Phil Berry	Independent Governor	Sarah Knowles	Deputy Principal WHC Group
Sue Farnfield	Staff Governor	Eamonn McCarroll	Director of Finance WHC Group
Irina Kendix	Independent Governor	Tammy Nuthall	Deputy Principal Barnfield
Richard Lewis (v)	Independent Governor	Anne-Marie Kinsella	Clerk to Corporation
Matt Luheshi (v)	Independent Governor		
Heather Lunn	Student Governor	<b>Apologies</b>	<b>Role:</b>
Chris Nicholls	Independent Governor	Guy Ainsley	Independent Governor
Jamie Robertson	Student Governor		
Jason Smith	Independent Governor		
Ben Stapleton	Independent Governor		
Paul Thompson (v)	Independent Governor		
David York (v)	Staff Governor		

### Ref Agenda Item

#### 32/21 1 General Business

##### 1.1 Apologies for absence and quoracy

Apologies were noted and accepted, and the meeting was quorate.

##### 1.2 Declaration of pecuniary interests

There were no additional declarations.

##### 1.3 Requests for urgent business

The SPH remuneration to be agreed in Part of the meeting.

#### 33/21 2 Previous Minutes

##### 2.1 Minutes of the last meeting (8 December 2021 & 27 January 2022)

The minutes of the previous meetings, parts 1 and 2 were agreed as true and accurate records of the meetings and were approved for electronic signature.

##### 2.2 Action from previous minutes

Action	Ref	Summary of Actions	Status
1	24/21/4.2	Review residual score on learner achievement rates for apprenticeship provision	Completed
2	25/21/5.2	Student Work Experience & Industry Placement to go to the next meeting <i>Please see details below.</i>	Completed
1 (Pt2)	30/21/10.3	Financial data reports to include a timeline	Completed

2.2 (cont.) **The Student Work Experience & Industry Placement Report** was discussed and in response to Governors questions the following was noted.

The pandemic has had a significant impact on some industries/sectors and the College, as has expected, is reporting a low numbers of industry placements in the first term due to the Covid-19 restrictions. This should improve in the spring and summer terms as restrictions are lifted.

Since the report was published in December the gap between Barnfield and West Herts in terms of work placements is narrowing, and opportunities are shared equally across the Group. The College has also increased the number of employers in Luton and the overall position is now more aligned to Hertfordshire. The College's centralised employer liaison team will focus on increasing the number of employers needed to support students to develop the skills linked to their intended destinations. .

The report was received and noted by the Board.

### 2.3 Matter arising not on the agenda

There were no matters arising not on the agenda.

## 34/21 3 Principal's Report

The Principals Report had been circulated in advance of the meeting for the Boards' consideration.

The Principal highlighted that the Ofsted Report was published; the FE Commissioner had been notified of the College's wish to withdraw from the merger selection process with Central Beds College (CBC) and the bid for the Institute of Technology (IoT) had not been successful.

In response to Governors questions the Principal said the College hoped to be able to continue working with the University of Hertfordshire on curriculum development. In addition, the College would develop their own level 4 & 5 qualifications and pursue alternative partners. The funding for the IoT building at Hemel will need to be sourced elsewhere.

Students required to isolate were being supported to learn at home if they were well enough.

Cyber training for staff will be completed by the end of February, additional phishing exercises will be carried out during the remainder of the academic year.

Governors queried if there would be future application opportunities for an IoT. The Principal advised that this seemed unlikely at this point.

The public consultation for phases 2 & 3 at Barnfield was positive. The planning application will be submitted next week. Governors were delighted with the Barnfield College student reaching the final 3 of the Student of the Year Awards (Motor Vehicle). The Principal will pass congratulations to the teacher and student concerned.

The Board noted the Principals report.

## 35/21 4 Ofsted Inspection Feedback

The Principal for Barnfield College (CG) who acted as the nominee for the recent College Ofsted Inspection, gave a presentation on the feedback given by Ofsted. CG explained that the published report was limited to the number of words it contained and this presentation would give the Board the full details of Ofsted's feedback as received by CG as the nominee. The outcome was noted, and the grade profile was as follows:

- |   |             |
|---|-------------|
| • Education Programmes for Young People | Good        |
| • Adult                                 | Outstanding |
| • Apprenticeship                        | Outstanding |
| • High Needs                            | Outstanding |
| • Quality of Education                  | Good        |
| • Behaviour and Attitudes               | Good        |
| • Personal Development                  | Outstanding |
| • Leadership and Management             | Outstanding |

CG went though each area outlining in detail the strengths, weaknesses and continued college focus areas. The grading of 'outstanding' for Apprenticeships and High Needs is particularly well regarded. Technical skills being learnt by students was commended as well as the links between on and off job training. There are strengths in skills for employment and end destinations and the level of understanding by students for equality, diversity, prevent and sexual harassments is very high.

The 'outstanding' grade for Leadership and Management was commended. It was noted that although not contained within the report, feedback about governance was very positive and that Governors provided good levels of support

and challenge through their diverse skillset and had a clear oversight of safeguarding and the College's strengths and weaknesses.

Responses from parents and staff surveys had been extremely high. The Report would be shared with parents and relevant stakeholders. Student Governors confirmed that the report represented how they felt about their College. The Board thanked and congratulated CG and the College for all their hard work.

## **36/21 5 Strategic Review and Planning**

The Principals Report on Strategic Review and Planning had been circulated in advance of the meeting for the Boards' consideration. The following points were discussed and clarified.

The College's Strategic Plan is at the end of its timeframe and work to refresh the plan has been paused until some key factors are better understood. The key factors are: The Covid-19 pandemic and its impact on the economy and skills; The FE White Paper: Skills for Jobs and a merger between West Herts College and Central Beds College.

In response to Governors questions the Principal said the College had been invited to lead a collaborative response across the Hertfordshire area as part of the Skills Accelerator programme. School and Employment Plans are in place setting out the regional and local labour market context and job specific skills requirements. Project Bravura is delivering skills beyond the vocational qualifications, to meet specific employers' needs, these are delivered and certificated by the College. Project Meliora is providing additional job-specific skills, over and above those gained by primary qualifications, for adults and apprentices. Government priorities are plans to develop Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIP), further increase collaboration with providers and employers, and extend technical qualifications. The Board discussed the balance between collaboration and competition and the College's current status and impact with regards to existing collaborations. The College has good and effective links with local providers and employers.

A full suite of T-Levels will be offered in September 2022. The requirement to complete Maths and English for T-Levels has been removed, it is still a requirement to have an industry placement. The funding for overlapping BTEC qualifications has been withdrawn and this is a concern to the College and the FE Sector. T-levels are currently running as pilots and the uptake is low across England. Some universities are not recognising T-Levels for entry to university, this is a concern and has led to the College's decision to offer A-Levels from September 2022 at some campuses. The interest so far from young people has been positive. A dedicated A-level team will be recruited. The College continue to lobby against the issues around T-Levels.

The funding for higher level courses remains limited. The College is looking to create a more modulated HE offer.

The White Paper outlines changes to Governance which includes the requirement for an annual self-assessment (SAR) and an external review of governance at least every 3 years. The College's Annual Self-Assessment process will start in the Summer and include a specific focus on Governance, followed by an external review of Governance in the Autumn or Spring terms.

**Central Beds College Merger - Confidential item - Please see part 2 of the minutes**

**ACTION 1** – Draft Strategic Plan to be brought to the Corporation Meeting in July 2022.

**ACTION 2** – Final draft Strategic Plan to be ready for the Corporation Meeting in October/November 2022.

## **37/21 Governance and Governors' Reports**

### **6.1 Learning Walks; Visits and events feedback**

The Chair held one to one meetings with the independent governors during January. Feedback had been given to the Principal and Clerk. Independent Governors had noted that at this time they all wished to stay on when their terms of office expired. This will be reviewed and discussed as and when terms of office require renewal.

### **6.2 Corporation Membership**

No terms of office were due to expire and there were no vacancies. It was noted that the Board would like to improve its diversity, it was also key to recruit the right people with the right skills.

**38/21 Urgent Business**

*Confidential item - Please see part 2 of the minutes*

**39/21 Date of next meeting – Wednesday 9 March 2022**

**40/21 Part 2**

**Finance Report**

*Confidential item - Please see separate minutes.*

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**Minutes approved by the Corporation on the 9 March 2022**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Ref</b>	<b>Summary of Actions</b>	<b>who</b>	<b>when</b>
1	36/21/5	Draft Strategic Plan to be brought to the Corporation Meeting in July 2022.	Gill Worgan	13 July 22
2	36/21/5	Final draft Strategic Plan to be ready for the Corporation Meeting in October/November 2022.	Gill Worgan	Oct/Nov 22