

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE FURTHER EDUCATION
CORPORATION OF BURTON AND SOUTH DERBYSHIRE COLLEGE
HELD ON 11 NOVEMBER 2020 (BY ZOOM)**

PRESENT

Everton Burke (Chair)
Keith Buckley
Jo Lang
Rajinder Mann
Chris Prosser

Sarah Sandle
Dawn Ward (Principal and
Chief Executive)
Ben Webster

IN ATTENDANCE

John Beaty
Gary Chin
Ryan Halford
Yvonne Orton
Keith Scribbins (Clerk)

PART 1

**20.79 CONFIRMATION OF QUORUM, APOLOGIES FOR
ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

- (i) The proposal to hold the meeting by electronic means had been made by the Principal and agreed by the Chair.
- (ii) Apologies for absence had been received from Paul Fitzpatrick.
- (iii) There were no new declarations of interests and existing declarations were continued.
- (iv) The Clerk confirmed that the meeting was quorate.

The report was **APPROVED**.

20.80 MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

- (i) Members **RECEIVED** the Skills and Experience Audit Summary which had been prepared by Yvonne Orton. The strongest skills represented were in health and safety and training and development. The weakest were in law and marketing – but even these areas were well represented given the size of the Corporation. The score range was 23 to 36. The audit report was referred to the Search Committee members who would soon be interviewing candidates for membership.
- (ii) Dawn Ward reported that the 'Scheme of Delegation' was being updated and would be presented to the Corporation in December.

- (iii) The Clerk reported that there would be a meeting of the Search Committee just before the Corporation meeting on 9 December 2020. There were two candidates to consider (Sarah Marshall – from Georges Park – and Hadia Rashid – previously a student governor). It was felt that these two candidates would develop the Corporation’s profile and skills matrix.
- (iv) Everton Burke reported that he had updated his CV to cover his work with the National Black Governors Association. Members congratulated Everton on this recognition.
- (v) John Beaty reported that it was expected that a student governor would be appointed in time for the December Corporation meeting.

The report on membership matters was **APPROVED**.

20.81 MINUTES OF PART 1 OF THE CORPORATION MEETING HELD ON 23 SEPTEMBER 2020

The minutes were **RECEIVED** as a true record and there were no matters arising.

20.82 STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK AND DISCUSSIONS ARISING FROM POLICY UPDATES

- (i) Dawn Ward introduced her paper covering
 - The College of the Future
 - Spending Review
 - College Oversight and Intervention
 - Joint Unions’ Pay Claim

In introducing her report Dawn made the following observations. The College of the Future made 3 recommendations.

- Statutory right to life-long learning
- Backing business, driving innovation, and addressing skills gaps
- A post-16 education and skills system which has impact and removes unproductive competition between institutions

Dawn pointed out that the College already adhered to these maxims and members **NOTED** this in welcoming the College of the Future Document.

- (ii) Wednesday 25 November is the date for publication of the spending review and within it departmental budgets. A prelude to the review is the third annual report from the Institute of Fiscal Studies. Also, 52 of the Government’s MPs are calling on the Government to honour its manifesto pledges and to narrow the North/South divide.

- (iii) In respect of College oversight it has been clarified that where a College seeks cashflow help, the ESFA is not required to issue a notice to improve but 'may' do so. The National Audit Office was said that funding cuts have made financial health improvements very difficult.
- (iv) The Joint Trade Unions have submitted their 2020/21 pay claim to the national body. It calls for restoration of pay levels, a living wage i.e. of the living wage foundation and contracted out services to be brought back in-house.

The College's SLT responded to the AoC saying the claim is unrealistic and ignores the sector's need to gain value for money. Any settlement needs to be 'achievable, affordable and reflect college operations'.

Members **ENDORSED** the Principal's report and it was felt that whilst the College already followed much of the advice in the College of the Future document, it was a document to be welcomed, nevertheless.

The change from 'will' to 'may' in the oversight rules regarding notices to improve issued by the ESFA, was welcomed.

In respect of the union pay claim it was clarified that the 'living wage' referred to was the 'Living Wage Foundation' figure not the Government's living wage figure. It was also pointed out that the College emphasised growth as the clue to wage improvements. Finally, members **AGREED** that the College's direction of travel should be to living wage improvements but affordability was crucial.

20.83 SAUDI PROJECT (CONFIDENTIAL)

CONFIDENTIAL

20.84 REPORT FROM STUDENT MEMBER

The meeting was reminded that the student President (and hence, member of the Corporation) had not yet been appointed but John Beaty expressed confidence in an appointment by the December meeting. This report was **NOTED**.

20.58 MINUTES OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE HELD ON 15 SEPTEMBER 2020

The minutes of the Audit Committee held on 15 September 2020 were **NOTED** and the recommendations set out therein were **APPROVED**.

The summary report had been **ADOPTED** by the Corporation at its meeting on 23 September 2020 (see item 20.72 of those minutes). It

was **NOTED** that the Corporation had **ADOPTED** the reports on fraud self-assessment and the Code of Practice. The documents had been signed by the Chair and the Principal.

20.85 QUALITY AND PERFORMANCE REPORT

Ryan Halford and John Beaty introduced this report. The main features were Skills, Standards, Partnerships, Governor Dashboard and Appendices on CSFs. One of the dashboards covered Business Development, Employability and Marketing.

The Executive Summary covered

- Outcomes for Learners
- Classroom based learning
- Apprenticeships
- Performance Tables
- Higher Education
- Reviewing Teaching, Learning and Assessment
- COVID update.

Close attention was paid to areas of potential and significant concern.

In discussion members concentrated on retention and measures to deal with it in the pandemic. They also discussed the impact of COVID and measures related to it on programme delivery. A further point in discussion was the risk and challenges regarding staff retention. Recruitment and retention of staff from heavy technical industries was particularly problematic. Some of the innovative approaches to the staff recruitment and retention situation, were explained. It was noted that the pandemic was having some positive (as well as negative) effects on recruitment and retention.

Members went on to note and discuss reports on fund raising, charity donations, food banks and social media activity. It was also noted that whilst international activity was currently stalled it was hoped to revive this in the summer term. Mention was also made of CISCO and its ability to help level 3 students to enhance their qualifications. Finally, members discussed cyber security and its contribution to our value added work.

Ryan and John were thanked fulsomely for their detailed report. The report was **ADOPTED** and its policies and strategies were **APPROVED**.

20.86 FINANCE AND BUSINESS REPORT

Gary Chin introduced his Finance Report which covered highlights v budget and Key Performance Indicators.

There was a detailed section on operating surplus/deficit, a summary statement of comprehensive income, variances in income and expenditure, cashflow, the balance sheet, financial health scoring (good) and accountability.

Members congratulated Gary and his team for good achievements in difficult times. The solvency and cash days in hard positions were particularly good by comparison with most other colleges. Prudent steps were being taken to achieve cost reduction where income was low. There were some exceptional costs (eg the cost of PPE).

Members discussed solvency and the 'comfortable' position so far. They also discussed the £658K grant which needs to be spent by the end of March 2021 on buildings. The difficulty was arranging contractors to do the work quickly.

Members were pleased that financial health scoring continued as 'good' and welcomed the detail in the report on CSFs. They also felt that previous decisions to support capital expenditure on computing were now paying dividends in respect of online learning.

Finally, members **NOTED** the revised figure due to COVID eg income £101K lower than budget, reduction in total pay costs but non-pay costs above budget (£113K) due to COVID and PPE costs.

The Finance and Business Report was **ADOPTED** and its policies and strategies were **APPROVED**.

20.87 MEETING FEEDBACK, CORE VALUES AND GOVERNOR LINKS

The Clerk introduced his report setting out a summary on feedback from the meeting held on 23 September 2020. There had been six completed forms and most responses (36 out of 42) 'strongly agreed' with the evaluative statements. The remaining six responses 'agreed' with those statements.

Highlights from the best aspect of the meeting section were

- Wellbeing of staff and students
- Well chaired
- Balance of support and challenge
- Excellent papers.

There were few comments in the 'worst aspect' section of the feedback form (eg technical and audio issues).

The Clerk's conclusion was 'clear and pleasing feedback with interesting comments for later development'. This assessment was **ENDORSED**.

Finally, members **NOTED** that all core values had been touched on during the meeting and understandably, due to COVID, there were no reports on governor walks etc. The training sessions led by Ryan Halford were felt to have been very good and worthwhile.

20.88 DATE OF NEXT MEETING, ANY OTHER BUSINESS AND CONFIDENTIALITY

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Wednesday 9 December 2020. There was no formal other business. The Saudi Project report was classified as 'confidential'.

Gary Chin reported that a special meeting of the Audit Committee had been organised for 12 January 2021 to consider the financial statements and related documents. These had been delayed due to COVID.

Dawn Ward said meetings would continue by zoom and consideration was being given to a zoom social meeting – mince pies at the ready!

Rajinder Mann offered to help with the College's Diwali celebrations.

Everton reported that the member of staff who had been hospitalised due to COVID was now at home and recovering slowly.