

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION OF BURTON AND SOUTH DERBYSHIRE COLLEGE HELD ON 24 FEBRUARY 2021 (BY ZOOM)

PRESENT

Everton Burke (Chair)
Keith Buckley
Elias Lata
Rajinder Mann
Sarah Marshall
Charlotte Moore
Chris Prosser
Sarah Sandle
Ben Webster

IN ATTENDANCE

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

PART 1

21.13 CONFIRMATION OF QUORUM, APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

(i) The proposal to hold the meeting by electronic means had been made by the Principal and agreed by the Chair.

(ii) The Chair extended a warm welcome to all members present and attendees. Apologies for absence had been received from Jo Lang, Hadia Rashid and Dawn Ward due to family circumstances. Members introduced themselves to Elias Lata.

(iii) There were no new declarations of interests and existing declarations were continued.

21.14 MEMBERSHIP MATTERS: REPORT OF DEVELOPMENT DAY HELD ON 5 FEBRUARY 2021

The Clerk introduced his report covering:

- The theme of the seminar: governor assessment, teaching and assessment and the new FE White Paper.
- Rajinder Mann's study and report on data collection (including the skills audit and meeting evaluations). This report emphasised the 'strongly agree' results of the evaluation process. 'Hidden' disability was discussed, and members **AGREED** that evaluations should cover all the protected characteristics in the 2020 Equalities Act (including sexual orientation).
- The other conclusions reached (which were confirmed in the Board meeting), relating to items such as:
 - Revision of the evaluation form which was **APPROVED**.
 - The Chair's conversations with individual governors – **ENDORSED**.
 - **APPROVAL** of the new teaching, learning and assessment rubric.
 - **APPROVAL** of collaborative work as described by John Beaty.
 - **NOTING** of Dawn Ward's 'excellent' report on the White Paper
 - Hopes that there would be an improvement in national attitudes towards apprenticeships.

21.15 MINUTES OF PART 1 OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20 JANUARY 2021

These minutes were **RECEIVED** as a true record and there were no matters arising from them.

21.16 STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK AND DISCUSSIONS ARISING FROM POLICY UPDATES

John Beaty introduced a paper on policy updates. This covered:

- The Education Road Map. The route out of lockdown to cover school and college re-opening, flow testing and alternative exam arrangements.
- The appointment of Sir Kevan Collins as Education Recovery Minister.
- Cash support for HE (£50m of which £4m is for relevant Colleges i.e., £22K each).
- The Turing Scheme (replacing the Erasmus Scheme).

Members discussed the importance of keeping students and staff safe and lateral flow testing arrangements. They also discussed the £22K per college allocation and received a report (which they **ENDORSED**) on its disbursement to HE students (especially those in need). The Turing Scheme was welcomed as it was thought to offer valuable opportunities

for students to study abroad. The decision to apply, initially, for 40-50 places was **ENDORSED**.

21.17 UPDATE ON SAUDI PROJECTS

CONFIDENTIAL

21.18 REPORT FROM STUDENT MEMBERS

Governors received the report prepared by Charlotte and Elias. The report covered:

- The going 'live' of the Canvas page including a learner questionnaire on their experience of the College.
- In light of the cancellation of the Freshers' Fayre (due to COVID) an end of year celebration is in plan. This is to include a day of fun! The emphasis will be on a digital communication as far as possible.

Members **APPROVED** the student report and congratulated Charlotte and Elias on the progress they were making in difficult circumstances.

21.19 MINUTES FROM AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON 24 NOVEMBER 2020 AND 12 JANUARY 2021 AND BRIEF REPORT FROM MEETING HELD ON 23 FEBRUARY 2021

Keith Buckley (Chair of the Audit Committee) introduced the minutes and report. The minutes contained 17 recommendations and the report, two recommendations (covering risk management update and performance of auditors). The main recommendations were:

- Keith Buckley and Ben Webster to continue to serve as Chair and Vice Chair.
- Register of recommendations **APPROVED**.
- Good progress with Audit Plan.
- Reports on HR (adequate), risk management (substantial), compliance (already dealt with).
- Adoption of annual report of the Committee.
- Audit findings from external auditors excellent.
- Letter of representation recommended for signature.

All these recommendations were **APPROVED**.

Members went on to discuss how the market of audit firms (few working in FE) should be sensitively assessed (when renewals are due). Members also asked if the auditors fed back good practice from elsewhere and the Chair of the Committee confirmed that they did so.

21.20 FINANCE AND BUSINESS REPORT (INCLUDING UPDATED FINANCE REGULATIONS AND CAPITAL TRANSFORMATION FUNDS)

Gary Chin introduced his report and a number of appendices (Property Strategy, FE Capital Transformation Fund, Burton Stronger Towns Fund Application, DfE spreadsheet, Financial Regulations and related documents).

The headlines in the report were:

- £154K above budget for the month, adult education in line with budget, HE Variance and 'other income' performance.
- YTD highlights – operating surplus £269K, income £8,278K and margin 1.42%
- The report also covered the effect of COVID on operating surplus/deficit, the statement of comprehensive income and risks, income and expenditure variances and related matters such as cash flow and forecast. Finally, the report set out the balance sheet as at the end of January.
- The draft Property Strategy built on the previous strategy and curriculum plans. There were detailed sections on building details, their suitability and condition, space needs and the proposed future strategy and its financing.
- Key elements of the future strategy included redevelopment, the reduction in energy costs, rationalisation of centres, achieving carbon neutrality by 2025.

In discussion reference was made to the continuing good financial health and solvency (226 days). Also, members were given detail of proposed financial regulation changes (e.g., depreciation arrangements made clearer and bad debt proposals).

At the conclusion of the discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The Finance and Business Report and its recommendations be **APPROVED**.
 - (ii) The revised Property Strategy be **APPROVED**.
 - (iii) The revised Financial Regulations be **APPROVED**.
 - (iv) The draft Capital Transformation Fund application (lighting) be **APPROVED**.
 - (v) The Burton Stronger Towns Fund Application be **APPROVED**.
- Members asked that relevant staff be thanked for their hard work in relation to the appendices to the Finance and Business Report and Gary was thanked for his stewardship of these matters.

21.21 QUALITY AND PERFORMANCE REPORT (INCLUDING EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY REPORT)

These reports prepared and introduced by Ryan Halford and John Beaty, also covered a wealth of detail which was very significant to the College and the community it serves. The report had an elaborate executive summary and some key themes were:

- The current future of vocational exams
- Learner attendance (fallen to 82.6%)
- Alteration to assessment policy
- Retention remains high
- Indefinite delay re work placements
- Areas of potential and significant concern (e.g., apprenticeship and business development approaches)
- External Quality Assurance and Skills Delivery
- Feedback from students
- Teaching and Learning Assessment

Members studied the Equality and Diversity Annual Report in detail. They praised the ambition in the document ('to advance equality of opportunity for all') and the aims (e.g., eliminate unlawful discrimination and, eventually, disadvantage).

The document emphasised the College vision, mission and strategic objective statement and had sections on:

- BSDC's socio economic context
- Learning and Teaching equalities
- Age analysis, gender analysis, ethnicity analysis and other matters
- Equality and Diversity Training and objectives.

In discussion members asked if it would be possible to provide timelines and trends over time. This will be investigated. They also discussed the report given on unconscious bias and the 'me day idea'. They praised the College on its British Council award and its international focus. Overall, the feeling was that the Quality report demonstrated a high degree of commitment and hard work from the College's staff, managers and students.

The Quality and Performance Report and the Equality and Diversity Report were **APPROVED** with acclamation.

21.22 MEETING FEEDBACK, CORE VALUES AND GOVERNOR LINKS

The Clerk introduced his report on the meeting feedback relating to the Corporation meeting held on 20 January 2021.

All of the evaluative comments scored 'strongly agree' (64 responses) or 'agree' (6 responses). There were a number of items described as the best aspects of the meeting including finance reports and status, auditors' reports, Saudi matters and engagement of all governors.

It was suggested that a tutorial on the use of the iPad could be provided for anyone who might need it. Meeting by Zoom was thought to work well with only a few technical hitches.

The Clerk said the report was very encouraging and set out an excellent record of support from the officers and staff. Members warmly **ENDORSED** the feedback report. They felt that all the items in the adaptive framework had been covered well. There was no governor link update (due to COVID).

21.23 OTHER BUSINESS, DATE OF NEXT MEETING AND CONFIDENTIALITY

- There was no 'Any Other Business'.
- The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Wednesday 28 April 2021.
- The item concerning Saudi Arabia continued to be regarded as confidential.