

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION OF BURTON AND SOUTH DERBYSHIRE COLLEGE HELD ON 7 JULY 2021 BY ZOOM

PRESENT

Everton Burke (Chair)
Katy Broomfield
Keith Buckley
Dan Janes
Rajinder Mann
Sarah Marshall
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

21.51 CONFIRMATION OF QUORUM, APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND NEW MEMBER

- (i) The proposal to hold the meeting by electronic means had been made by the Principal and agreed by the Chair.
- (ii) The Chair welcomed all members and attendees. Dan Janes was welcomed as a new member (see below).
- (iii) Apologies for absence were received from Eliasz Lata.
- (iv) There were no new declarations of interests and all existing declarations were continued.
- (v) Members received a report from the Search and Development Committee. The Committee had interviewed Dan Janes and felt he was an excellent candidate. The Committee discussed with him his Human Resources and Industrial Relations experience, his role in Toyota and his support for apprentices and diversity policy. The Corporation **APPROVED** Dan's appointment as a member for

an initial four year term and **NOTED** his biography and curriculum vitae.

- (vi) The Corporation **NOTED** that the terms of office of Rajinder Mann and Chris Prosser were due to end. Rajinder was about to complete her second period of office but the Search Committee felt her contribution (in respect of equality and diversity, remuneration and HE) had been exceptional. Hence, they recommended Rajinder's reappointment for a further term and Chris Prosser's reappointment for his second term. The Corporation **APPROVED** these proposals.
- (vii) Everton Burke and Rajinder Mann were **REAPPOINTED** as Chair and Vice Chair of the Corporation for 2021/2022.
- (viii) The draft calendar for 2021/2022 was **APPROVED**.

21.52 MINUTES OF CORPORATION MEETING HELD ON 9 JUNE 2021

Members **RECEIVED** the draft minutes of Part I of the meeting and these were **APPROVED** with no matters arising.

21.53 STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK AND DISCUSSIONS ARISING FROM POLICY UPDATES PLUS ESFA LETTER OF 28 JUNE 2021

Members considered the report from Dawn Ward and its annex: the letter from the ESFA concerning the 'annual strategic conversation' dealing with significant college matters.

The policy update report covered the following items:

- The work by Peers (including Lord Lingfield) to strengthen the draft Skills Bill
- Adult Education Budget Reconciliation – lobbying of the Education Secretary to avoid cash clawback and the financial weakening of the sector which this would cause
- Key FE Statistics – The AoC's report covered a large number of items including, for example, 1.7m learners in training; 188,000 apprentices in colleges and 81% of colleges rated 'good' or 'outstanding'
- The new Inspection Handbook with significant sections on the extension of Covid transitional arrangements; single sex learner discussions on safeguarding and addressing sexual harassment, violence, and online abuse (as part of Safeguarding)
- Thanks to Sarah Sandle for her work with SLT

The ESFA letter thanked the College for its work on:

- Leadership and governance (open and transparent)
- The Board's support for the College's vision
- The promotion of equality and diversity
- Strong collaboration with schools etc
- The 'employer focus' of the College
- The way the College copes with 'top challenges' e.g., recruiting and retaining staff.

Members welcomed the report from Dawn and the letter from the ESFA. Both gave a 'very encouraging' picture of the progress being made by the Board, the SLT, the teaching and administrative staff and students. The report and letter were **ENDORSED**.

21.54 UPDATE ON SAUDI PROJECTS (CONFIDENTIAL)

CONFIDENTIAL

21.55 REPORT FROM STUDENT MEMBERS

The report had been written by Charlotte Moore-Smith and Eliaz Lata. The key point in the report was the appointment of two new learners to the Student Council – Mitchell Ely (engineering) and Mohammed Mahmood (childcare). Their interests covered mental health, diversity and acceptance. Thanks were given to Charlotte who was leaving the College to go to university. The student report was **NOTED**.

21.55 MINUTES OF AUDIT COMMITTEE HELD ON 8 JUNE 2021

The Chair of the Committee, Keith Buckley, introduced the minutes and reported on the main outcomes from the meeting, as follows:

- All members (except Ben Webster) and auditors were present
- The audit firms were both likely to terminate their work with College. This is a nationwide development as costs are expected to increase substantially
- The minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2021 were **APPROVED**
- The register of recommendations could not be completed as some audit reports had not been submitted to the College
- Work submitted from the auditors on compliance was 'good' and on governance which was 'excellent'
- The risk management termly update was completed and **NOTED**

In discussion it was ascertained that Mazars had apologised for the missing reports and this matter was being pursued with them. It was

also pointed out in discussion that the term of appointment for the internal and external auditors was five years.

The Audit Committee Minutes were **ADOPTED**.

21.56 QUALITY AND PERFORMANCE REPORT

Ryan Halford and John Beaty introduced their report and the framework. Generally, learner outcomes were above the national benchmark. Due to a sub-contracting difficulty, small sized award qualifications were below benchmark. The College had submitted all its teacher assessed grades by the deadline. A temporary appeals policy has been published on the College website. Apprenticeship achievements are above the national benchmark, but concerns remain about recruitment of assessors and trainers. On a more positive note, 92% of staff reviewed met the College's teaching, learning and assessment expectations and tutor reviews continue to improve. In 2020/21, 244 learning walks were carried out. Finally, problem areas were outlined, and this included recruitment to staffing vacancies and the high staff attrition rate (e.g., motor vehicle and carpentry courses). The second part of the report covered skills delivery, attendance rates, performance, retention apprenticeship performance, the Board assurance framework and matters such as apprenticeship feedback.

The report concluded with items on teaching, learning and assessment partnerships, learner services and international work.

Members were very positive in their praise of the quality report and the detail it contained. It was hoped that the newly appointed apprenticeship manager would 'make a difference'. Members also commented on the effects of the pandemic, the College 'brand' and marketing strategies.

In relation to the draft framework document members asked if there had been substantial alterations since the training day when this item had been covered in detail. There had been no changes and, hence, the framework document and the Quality and Performance Report were **ADOPTED** by the Corporation.

21.57 FINANCE AND BUSINESS REPORT AND THE TWO-YEAR FINANCIAL PLAN

Gary Chin introduced his report which set out headlines, highlights, performance indicators and an executive summary. The report also covered the statement of comprehensive income, cash flow, the balance sheet, financial health scoring and property matters.

The report analysed the degree to which COVID had caused a behind budget position. However, some key statistics were positive e.g., operating surplus, income and margin were good (considering the effect of COVID). The investment made in 'thin client' technology was very helpful in sponsoring online learning. However, the full impact of COVID for the year is not easy to estimate. However, it is clear that the year's deficit (estimated at £1,019K) supports the use of furlough measures.

In summary, as a result of COVID, the income forecast is above budget and other factors make for a health score of 'good' – despite COVID. The report went on to set out risks – especially sustaining financial health and achieving the adaptive plan. The statement of comprehensive income gave a detailed analysis of financial health and other features. The report analysed income variances and expenditure variances. Cashflow covered, inter alia, bank movements and the EBIT to cashflow bridge. Finally, the report covered the long-term investments and the balance sheet and as mentioned above financial health and the critical success factors.

Finally, members studied the Commentary to the 2021/2022 Budget submission. This covered:

- Current and future impacts of COVID
- Short term priorities and objectives
- Solvency
- Key budget assumptions
- Funding allocations
- Other grants and contracts
- Income and expenditure
- Depreciation
- Capital Plans
- An overall summary assessment

Members congratulated the College leadership team on how they had coped with the effects of COVID. Solvency was particularly good (102 days against a sector benchmark of 25 days). Members also welcomed the EBITDA figures and the financial health score.

Following their detailed scrutiny of the finance papers members **ADOPTED** the Finance and Business Report and the Commentary and two-year financial plan.

21.58 SEXUAL HARASSMENT REPORT

This report set out a review of activity at the College and was relevant to the national Ofsted review. The College review covered items such as stalking, bullying, physical assault or abuse and sexual assault/rape. The

report shows a decline in reports over a three-year period and all the numbers are, thankfully, low.

The review also covered:

- Case studies and how learners are supported
- Staff training
- Local Information
- Learner Awareness and Feedback

In discussion members asked to receive the review report on an annual basis. It was also mentioned that the review should not be confined to incidents which occurred inside College and work was being done to cover wider incidents and concerns.

The review of sexual harassment was **NOTED** and thanks were extended to all those who had contributed to it.

21.59 MEETING FEEDBACK, CORE VALUES, DATE OF NEXT MEETING AND CONFIDENTIALITY

(i) The feedback (from the Corporation meeting of 9 June 2021) was, again, very pleasing. Virtually all the evaluative statements were 'strongly agreed'. It was **NOTED** that one member had experienced technological difficulties with his own laptop, and this had prevented him from fully participating in the meeting. The items praised by members were the pace of the meeting, the reports, the welcome extended to the new staff governor and the policy updates. The Clerk's comment was 'a welcome report showing good feedback from what was a complex but well managed meeting'. The feedback report was **NOTED** and the Clerk's summary was **ENDORSED**.

(ii) It was felt that all the core values had been covered in the meeting.

(iii) There was no further business and only the Saudi item was regarded as confidential.

(iv) The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Wednesday 22 September 2021.