

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Corporation
held on Tuesday 19 October 2021**

Present: - Igor Andronov (Chair)
James Caird
Julia Cotton
Laura Johnston
Debbie Lambert
Alan Layng
Adam Matthews
Jeremy Nicholls
Ben Whiteley
David Williams (Principal)

In attendance: - Jo Ricketts (Deputy Principal)
Edward Gwillim (Director of Finance)
Debra Baldwin (Director of Personnel)
Linda Watkins (Clerk to the Corporation)

The meeting was quorate as ten Governors were present at the meeting which was held remotely.

	Action
<p>1. I. Apologies for absence. Tony Ford</p> <p>II. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p> <p>III. Declaration of Interest The Clerk reminded Governors to complete outstanding declarations for the current year. Debbie Lambert declared an interest as an employee with at Worcester University.</p> <p>2. I. Minutes of the Last Meetings The Board agreed that the Chair should sign the minutes of the Board meeting held on 13 July 2021 as a true record.</p> <p>II. There were no matters arising</p> <p>III. Notes from Governors' Workshop: 13 July 2021</p> <p><u>The Board agreed: -</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To approve the minutes <p><i>Discussion</i></p> <p>3. Principal's Report</p> <p>I. The Principal had prepared a written report which was noted with specific points discussed. The College is in discussion with Cambrian Training regarding delivery of apprenticeships in Wales which would be subject to funding from the Welsh Assembly Government. This was causing challenges for some businesses to employ apprentices who operate from the</p>	

Herefordshire/Welsh border. The College is continuing to work with Wye Valley Trust to provide training for some NHS staff in addition to Level 3 programmes delivered through the Strategic Development initiative. Basic English and maths programmes and ESOL delivery is also being offered. The Principal and Pro-Vice Chancellor at NMITE have discussed opportunities to work together; NMITE have recruited its first cohort of students this year. The College held two successful graduation ceremonies at Hereford Cathedral with appreciation recorded to the Deputy Principal and marketing team for arranging the event along with Governors who had attended.

A summary of enrolments was provided. There were fewer 16-18 years full time enrolments this year. CMT are identifying specific reasons and will review applications to individual courses to ascertain if the shortfall is due to the pandemic and likely to increase next year. During the pandemic more school leavers secured employment instead of post-16 programmes. The lack of face to face contact with schools could have resulted in a lower conversion rate from applications to enrolment this year. AoC have reported a similar picture in other colleges. 19+ Higher Education had reduced which is being discussed with Worcester University. It is anticipated that apprenticeship targets will be achieved this year. Lagged funding will potentially reduce funding in 2022/23. CMT will manage costs whilst ensuring that there is no negative impact on teaching, learning and the student experience. The cash forecast will be amended to reflect the current year's enrolments and lagged funding. The revised forecast will be distributed to Governors as soon as it is available. The majority of students have passed the census date which will be reflected in the management accounts and forecasts. There was discussion about fewer enrolments to the childcare programme and increased enrolments to health and social care noting that both courses attract similar students. CMT will analyse the impact of levelling out course fees across all campuses. Some young people may opt to travel to their local providers noting the competitive environment for post-16 provision. A Student Governor commented on his experience when enrolling at College referring to the bursary application which only included accommodation and not transport costs and could prevent some applicants from accepting courses. The Director of Finance responded that there are specific rules regarding bursaries.

E Gwillim

Capital bids submitted to ESFA to build an animal management unit at Holme Lacy Campus and a construction area at Oswestry Campus have been approved and will progress to the next stage; appreciation was recorded to the Director of Finance for overseeing the bids. A Governor suggested that the revised financial forecast included an assumption of matched funding for capital projects; it was confirmed that the cashflow assumed the capital projects would progress.

The Principal also recorded appreciation to the Deputy Principal who had prepared the RoAPT.

- II. The College continues to work closely with Public Health England and is following Government guidelines to manage the College during the pandemic. Mask wearing is no longer compulsory in public areas; the importance of personal hygiene, ventilation and seating plans are regularly reinforced to staff and students. The number of cases across all campuses had increased with 71 confirmed positive cases; a breakdown by faculties was provided. There were fewer cases compared with schools; a reflection of the high proportion of students who have been vaccinated. Hereford Campus had been used as a cross-college vaccination centre with c200 students vaccinated over two days. DfE require notification if the College has 10% or a minimum of five positive cases in an area. A positive LFT requires isolation until results of PCR tests are received. The DfE are delivering 72 carbon dioxide monitors to the College for distribution across campuses.
- III. ESFA correspondence to Accounting Officers dated 22 September 2021 was noted.

The Board agreed: -

- To note the Principal's report and update on operations during covid-19
- To note ESFA correspondence to Accounting Officers

4. KPIs

The Deputy Principal presented the KPIs summarising key points.

Overall retention to 15 September 2021 is 96.3% showing an improvement compared to the same period last year. It was acknowledged that this is extremely positive during the pandemic. Last year after the second lockdown some students secured employment and chose to leave their courses. Attendance ranged from 88%-93% against a target of 90% which was very good for the majority of faculties. Attendance and retention patterns are similar. Last year overall attendance had been good during the pandemic. Poor attendance to English and maths had been addressed with disciplinary action in February 2021 resulting in an improvement until the announcement of teacher assessed grades for GCSEs. This year there are live tracking reports to identify and address absences promptly. Apprenticeship achievement overall will be lower this year; the best-case overall achievement will be 68%. Timely achievement has been affected negatively by lockdown with some apprentices on furlough or required in their work place by their employers and unable to continue their training. MIDAS data will provide comparisons with other providers.

Decisions

5. Strategic Plan 2021-26

The Principal reminded Governors of the process to prepare the strategic plan which had involved Governors, staff and students. Annual operational plans would subsequently be prepared with relevant input from committees in November before presenting to the Board at the December meeting for approval.

The strategic plan was divided into key sections. The foreword contained background information which would be presented graphically and updated annually. Sections included the College's vision: 'to support students, communities and businesses to fully realise their potential by delivering high quality academic, technical, professional and community learning. We take pride in our legacy: successful students who are skilled, knowledgeable, enterprising, professional and resilient.'

The College mission had changed 'to realise potential and support success'.

Shared values and behaviours have been condensed following input from students, staff and Governors. It is intended that the statement of values will be embedded and used widely by the College.

Strategic commitments incorporated quality of teaching and learning, the College as an employer, sustainability and financial viability.

Following discussion and a couple of suggestions, including ensuring the health and safety responsibility of Governors was clearly defined, Governors confirmed that they were supportive of the style, presentation and content of the strategic plan which was succinct and was a usable document meaning progress and implementation could be monitored with an annual operational plan. Aims relevant to specific committees would be presented for discussion at committee meetings in November.

D Williams/
L Watkins

The Board agreed: -

- To approve the Strategic Plan 2021-26
- Committees would have further discussion about specific aims in November
- An annual operational plan would be prepared with targets to monitor implementation and achievement of the strategic plan; this would be presented at the next meeting
- To thank the Principal for facilitating development of the strategic plan and everyone's input

6. Governors' activity 2020/21, recommendations 2021/22

[Interests were recorded from the Chair, Vice Chair and Committee Chairs]

This was presented to the Board annually to confirm and endorse key appointments and inform Governors of activity undertaken during the previous year covering the following: -

- I. Composition of the governing body 2021/22 including appointment of Ben Whiteley, Student Governor.
- II. Attendance by non-members at Board meetings.
- III. Appointment of the Chair, Vice Chair and Chairs of Committee 2021/22.
- IV. Membership to Committees 2021/22.
- V. Attendance records 2020/21 showing 91% attendance at Board meetings which was marginally better than last year. It is a requirement to report individual attendance to Board meetings in the annual members' report and financial

statements.

VI. Review of Confidential Minutes 2020/21.

VII. Standing Orders and Terms of Reference 2021/22 proposing minor amendments which were outlined in the cover sheet.

The Board agreed: -

- To note the paper endorsing the current number, composition and membership to the Corporation, appoint Chairs for 2021/22 and release of confidential minutes as recommended
- To appoint Ben Whiteley as a Student Governor until 31 August 2022
- To approve the Standing Orders and Terms of Reference 2021/22

7. Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)

Key changes in part 2 KCSIE are reviewed every September; last year there was an additional review in January following Brexit. The Director of Personnel referred to part 2 which outlined Governors' responsibilities; Governors were requested to read and familiarise themselves with these. All staff are required to read part 1 and Governors are required to read part 2. The Director of Personnel is responsible for arrangements to ensure procedures are in place for safer recruitment, peer on peer abuse, sexual harassment and managing any allegations.

Additional powers are provided to safeguard students. There were changes to peer on peer abuse and sexual violence and harassment, employment and training of all adults with rigorous checks required by the employer. Mental health is part of safeguarding and there is a focus on online safety and cyber-crime. To embed KCSIE staff training and tutorials have been provided. Mental health training and support is also available to staff and students.

The Board agreed: -

- To note the revisions to KCSIE and acknowledge responsibilities of Governors in part 2

Information

8. Management Accounts to 30 September 2021. The balance sheet showed a strong cash position at this early stage in the year. There were no questions.

9. Risk Register. This would be reported to the Audit Committee. The risk associated with covid-19 would be assessed and downgraded when appropriate.

10. Any other business and comments

- I. Alan Layng had completed learning walks which he had found was a very useful experience, and interesting to understand from the aspect of watching teaching and learning being delivered as well as how lessons are assessed. Governors were invited to further learning walks between 10-24 January requesting availability and preferred campus to be forwarded to the Deputy Principal.

Governors

Governors

- II. Some Governors had agreed to participate in the Self Assessment Report (SAR) moderation on 11 November; further details will follow.
- III. A Governor asked when meetings would revert to be in person as opposed to held on Teams. This was being reviewed regularly taking account of Governors' views and covid-19 cases locally. It had been agreed previously to hold meetings either in person or on Teams, but not a combination which had proved less effective.

11. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Tuesday 14 December 2021: Governors' Workshop commencing at 2.30 pm and the Board meeting at 4.00 pm. Christmas lunch was planned at 12.30 pm subject to no further restrictions due to covid-19.

[Staff and Student Governors left the meeting]

12. Minutes of the confidential meeting

The Board agreed that the Chair should sign the confidential minutes of the Board meeting held on 13 July 2021 as a true record. There were no matters arising.

The Board agreed: -

- To approve the confidential minute