

MOULTON COLLEGE

CORPORATION

Minutes of the meeting held on 9th July 2020

Present: Mr C Matts (in the Chair), Mrs C Harris, Mr A Clarkson, Ms S O'Connor, Mr A Eastland, Mr B Hansford, Mrs P Hawkesford, Miss L Knapp, Mr T Neville, Mr M Pate and Mr A Thomson

In attendance: Mr D Aldridge, Miss A S Bruce, Mrs G M Hulley, Mrs K Riley (ESFA) and Mr J O'Shea

SECTION A – ROUTINE AND GOVERNANCE ITEMS:

20/37 Apologies for absence (Agenda item 1)

Apologies were received from Mr D McVean, Mr I James, Mrs S Ijewsky, Mr M Wakeford and Miss L Watson.

20/38 Declarations of interest (Agenda item 2)

Mr T Neville declared an interest in agenda items 10 and 11.

20/39 Minutes of last meeting (Agenda item 3, Paper A)

The minutes of the meeting held on the 30th April 2020 were approved as a correct record and would be signed by the Chair after the meeting.

20/40 Actions outstanding from last meeting (Agenda item 4, Paper B)

The Information and Learning Technology Plan was due for completion in the autumn and it was agreed that the report would be presented to the Corporation.

The Chair reminded members of the Senior Leadership Team that the Corporation now required all papers to have a clear cover sheet summarising the paper and to have a clear ask of Governors. Middle managers were also to be reminded of this requirement.

20/41 Health and Safety (Agenda item 5)

The Business Recovery Team continued to meet on a regular basis with attention focused on reopening the College in August 2020. Health and Safety was a major feature of these discussions particularly around risk assessments. An interim Health and Safety Advisor was in place. The closing date for the advertised post of Health and Safety Advisor had just closed and it was hoped that a permanent post-holder would be appointed in due course.

Resolved: To receive the Health and Safety report.

SECTION B – PRINCIPAL'S REPORT:

20/42 Strategic Update (Agenda item 6)

The Principal outlined a number of key points for the Corporation's attention:

- Students had completed an online survey to gather feedback about their online learning experience. For those students that had experienced difficulties, daily contact was being made.
- Good progress had been made to the Estate in terms of additional security due to the extra footfall. CCTV cameras and swipe card access

would be required for all buildings. This would be completed over the summer. An external safeguarding audit would be completed in September 2020.

- Recruitment remained strong and set to hit targets although the impact of Covid-19 in September was still unknown. Enrolment had commenced at the start of the week.
- The marketing event was a success and lots of positive feedback was being received about the website.
- In terms of external agencies, a virtual visit from the FEC team was planned for 17th July 2020. A monitoring visit from Ofsted was expected in autumn 2020.

For those students who had not participated with online learning, the Corporation was informed that teams could demonstrate that they had engaged with these students. Detailed records were being kept and 1:1 support had been provided. The feedback from the online survey had provided a wealth of feedback which would be closely analysed and a plan developed to take forward any actions.

Resolved: To receive the Principal's report.

20/43 Strategic Plan 2020-30 (Agenda item 7, Paper C)

The Strategic Plan had been updated to reflect the comments received at the last meeting of the Strategy Committee in May 2020. The values had been subject to further development in consultation with staff and external stakeholders. The 5 corporate objectives included in the Strategic Plan were supported by a set of critical success factors with the delivery of each objective supported by a series of plans. Most of these plans had been finalised and were being scrutinised by relevant Committees prior to approval by the Corporation. A series of time-bound action plans were also in development and would be used by governors to hold SLT to account. The Corporation requested that:

- Dates to be included so that the Strategic Plan was reviewed on a regular basis.
- A final proof-reading and check on formatting was required.
- All other documents relating to the Strategic Plan should be updated to ensure consistency of key messages.
- Any key performance indicators should be realistic.
- Higher Education (HE) and higher level qualifications to feature strongly in all plans.

Resolved: To approve the Strategic Plan 2020-30.

SECTION C – QUALITY AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE:

20/44 Minutes of meeting held on 23rd June 2020 (Agenda item 8, Paper D)

The Chair of this Committee summarised key discussion points or decisions taken:

- Learning and performance: Assured by the robust processes that had been followed to reach decisions around achievement.
- English and maths: A lot of work had been completed in this area, for example staffing and timetabling. There was now a greater sense of urgency. It was too early to report on impact.
- HE: The Committee had been strengthened with the appointment of Dr Peter Jones.

- Curriculum Plan 2020-25: This had been updated since the last Strategy Committee in May. In recommending the Curriculum Plan for approval, the TLA Committee had agreed that the Plan offered real opportunities for progression and it was trying to be as responsive as possible to employers. **Decision:** To recommend the Curriculum Plan for approval.

In response to a question around the duration of the Plan the Corporation was informed that it was unwise to plan beyond a 5-year period. The Corporation agreed this time frame and that regular reviews should also be included.

Resolved: To approve the Curriculum Plan 2020-25.

20/45 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion [EDI] (Agenda item 9)

The governor champion for EDI reported on progress to date. The EDI Steering Group met on a regular basis. An action plan had been developed and this had been reviewed by the TLA Committee in June 2020. Although there were some amber and red actions, these were changing to green on a daily basis. Emphasis was placed upon the Corporation having a legal responsibility for the College meeting its requirements in relation to EDI. The fact that Student Services and Quality were equally involved with EDI was confirmation of the way in which this priority was embedded in the College's systems.

Resolved: The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion report was noted.

SECTION D – FINANCE:

20/46 Meeting of Finance and Resources Committee (Agenda item 10)

a. **15th June 2020:** The minutes of this meeting were noted.

b. 6th July 2020

The minutes of this meeting had been circulated previously. The Chair of this Committee summarised key discussion points or decisions taken:

- It was essential that recruitment targets were met and the Committee was pleased to hear of the progress being made.
- The appointment of a Dean of HE was welcomed and it was hoped that recruitment would progress from that.
- Three reports were scrutinised in detail and were being presented to the Corporation for approval:
 - Financial Regulations: A minor change had been requested which had since been actioned. **Decision:** To recommend the Financial Regulations for approval.
 - Apprenticeship and Employer Engagement Plan: Consideration was given to delivery with other partners. There was a need to be careful about staying within the funding rules. **Decision:** To recommend the Plan for approval.
 - Marketing Plan: This was essential for the College to achieve its objectives. It had been developed with a robust evidence base. **Decision:** To recommend the Plan for approval.

Resolved: The Corporation approved the Financial Regulations; Apprenticeship and Employer Engagement Plan; and, Marketing Plan.

SECTION E – AUDIT:

20/47 Minutes of meeting held on 29th June 2020 (Agenda item 12)

The minutes of this meeting had been circulated previously. The Chair of this Committee summarised key discussion points or decisions taken:

- Risk register: Agendas for TLA and F&R were planned around the risks for each Committee.
- Board assurance: Significant progress had been made with providing governors with data rich information including 2 internal audit reports (substantial assurance) and positive Landex peer review.
- Internal audit plan and strategy: Due to Covid-19, a 1-year plan had been presented which had been designed around the College's risk management framework. **Decision:** To recommend the internal audit plan for approval.
- External audit action plan and strategy: There were now two additional reporting requirements introduced by OfS: 'access and participation expenditure' and 'use of funds.' Risk areas were consistent with the previous year apart from 'going concern' where the risk had increased due to uncertainties about recruitment in the next academic year and in relation to the economic impact of Covid-19. Preparatory work July 2020; and, final audit October 2020. **Decision:** To recommend the external audit plan for approval.

The Corporation emphasised the importance of scenario planning in light of potential local lockdowns due to Covid-19. The Principal confirmed these were in development and the issues would be made explicit in the risk register.

Resolved: To approve the internal audit plan and strategy 2019-20; and, to approve the external audit plan and strategy 2019-20.

20/48 Risk Register (Agenda item 13, Paper H)

The CFO confirmed that the risk register was a communication tool and provided a comprehensive audit trail. The SLT reviewed and updated the risk register on a bi-monthly basis. An updated version would be shared with Committees for further feedback at the autumn meetings.

Resolved: To receive the risk register.

SECTION F – POLICIES

20/49 Health and Safety (Agenda item 14a, Paper I.1)

The policy was outlined and discussed. Members were informed of minor changes in relation to job titles, roles and responsibilities. The policy had been subject to external scrutiny by Bradley Associates who completed a further audit in March 2020.

The Corporation queried whether a 'management of infection control policy' should be considered. The CFO agreed to review this (**Action 166** – CFO). Assurance was sought about the measures being taken in relation to screen controls. Risk assessments for lockdown had been reviewed and updated; and, external advice had been taken to inform guidance to students on safe practice using IT.

Resolved: To approve the Health and Safety policy.

20/50 Child protection: Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy (Agenda item 14b, Paper I.2)

The policy was presented as part of an annual review. It included updated procedures in light of Covid-19. The policy was a legal requirement and confirmed the College's commitment to protecting all children (ie anyone under the age of 18) and vulnerable young people and adults who may be over the age of 18. In addition, the policy outlined the more detailed and policies and procedures that the College would put in place to keep children safe and respond to child protection concerns. The Governor Champion confirmed that the policy was an industry standard. Since May 2020, Keeping Children Safe in Education had been reissued. The Governor Champion recommended that guidance around the College's role in managing allegations against agency staff be highlighted in the policy (**Action 167 – VPC&Q**). The College previously had membership of the Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership. It was agreed that another Safeguarding meeting would be arranged before the end of term.

Resolved: To approve the Child protection: Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy

SECTION G - GOVERNANCE:

20/51 Governor Appointments (Agenda item 15)

The appointment of Pauline Prow as an independent governor was recommended by the Search and Governance Committee. This followed an interview by the Chair of Corporation and Principal. Pauline had extensive expertise at a senior level in Human Resources and in further education.

Resolved: To approve the appointment of Pauline Prow as a member of the full Corporation and F&R Committee.

The Search and Governance Committee had also discussed the current caseloads of the Chairs of F&R and TLA Committees. These were extensive due to the wide ranging responsibilities. This same Committee had agreed new Vice Chair arrangements and contact would be made with both individuals to seek agreement that they would take on such roles.

Resolved: Ian James (Finance) and Pauline Prow (Resources) would be Vice Chairs of F&R Committee; Pauline Hawkesford (FE and Quality) and Dr Peter Jones (HE) would be Vice Chairs of the TLA Committee.

20/52 Annual Review (Agenda item 16, Paper J)

a. Instrument and Articles of Government

The annual review of the Instrument and Articles of Government had been completed. A minor change had been made to the use of video conferencing. As 75% of the membership were not present, the report would be presented for approval at the next meeting.

b. Standing Orders

The annual review of the Standing orders had been completed with a minor change in relation to income received from external agencies.

c. Code of Conduct

The annual review of the Code of Conduct had been completed with minor changes.

Resolved: The Standing Orders and Code of Conduct were approved.

20/51 Governance 2020-21 (Agenda item 17, Paper K)

a. Meeting dates: Meeting dates for the next academic year were presented for approval. The Search and Governance Committee had considered a future governance model for meetings once Government restrictions were relaxed. Corporation meetings would follow a blended model of face to face and virtual. Committees would be invited to make a decision about their preferred model.

b. Committee terms of reference

A review of Terms of Reference (ToR) had been completed by each Committee during the summer term.

Resolved: To approve the meeting dates for 2020-21 and Committee ToR.

SECTION H – CLOSING ITEMS

20/52 Any other items of business

a. Student Governors: The Chair extended his thanks on behalf of the Corporation to Andrew Eastland and Lois Watson as this was their last meeting. Both had made a great contribution to the work of the Corporation. Andrew had been a student governor for 2 years and was congratulated on his contributions to student voice and his active support in relation to this priority.

20/53 Date and time of next meeting

Thursday, 1st October 2020 at 9.30 am.

Ms S O'Connor, Mr A Eastland and Mr M Pate left the meeting.