

Date: 13 May 2020

Venue: By video conference (Zoom online meeting)

Clerk to the Corporation
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Present: Seb Schmoller (Chair)
Gwyn Arnold
Stephen Betts
Peter Brooks
Richard Calvert (until 10.25)
Ian Falconer
Angela Foulkes
Beri Hare
Shelley Hemsley
Stephan Hollingshead
Chris Linacre
Michelle MacDonald
John Mothersole
Saleem Rashid
Kim Streets (until 10.25)
John Timms
Rhiannan Webber.

In attendance: Andrew Hartley, Commercial Director (CD)
Mark Pearson, Director Strategy, Planning and Systems Improvement (DPSPI)
Kate Platts, Executive Director of Finance and Resources (EDFR)
Alison Shillito, Governance Advisor and Clerk to the Governing Body (Clerk)
Paul Simpson, Executive Director of HR and Organisation Development (EDHROD)
Anita Traffon, Deputy Chief Executive (Curriculum, Quality and Assessment) (DCE:CQA)

**by
whom** **by
when**

20/2/1 **Welcome, introduction and apologies**

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed members to the first meeting of the Board by video conference.
The meeting was quorate.
- 1.2 The Chair reminded members that this was a special agenda to focus on achieving College strategic objectives with a clear focus on the impact, risks and mitigations in place because of Covid-19.

20/2/2 Declaration of interest

- 2.1 The Governing Body noted the standing declarations. There were no further declarations and the Governing Body agreed that there was no action required for any items on the agenda in response to the declarations.

20/2/3 Minutes of the meeting on 11 March 2020

- 3.1 The Governing Body approved the minutes of the meeting on 11 March 2020 as an accurate record.

20/2/4 Matters Arising & Action Record

- 4.1 Governors agreed that all matters arising from the minutes above had been included either on the current agenda or on the Action Record.

- 4.2 The Clerk presented the action record. The Governing Body discussed the actions in progress as follows:

Minute 20/1/28.3 refers: staff governor elections: the Clerk reported that it was very likely that she would need to seek approval under Chair's Action to defer the election on account of pressures facing key staff (including in Payroll) during the current period of remote working. This would also necessitate, under Chair's Action, extending the terms of office of the two elected staff governors until the completion of the election process for new staff governors, as soon as possible in the 2020/21 Academic Year.

- 4.3 **Minutes:** a member commented that the Governing Body had previously agreed that the Board should try to avoid noting items and instead take a positive action such as receive assurance. The Clerk agreed to bear this in mind for future minutes.

Clerk 10/7/20

- 4.3 Governing Body received the Action Record, noted the progress and approved the removal of the items marked as 'completed'.

20/2/5 Chief Executive and Principal's Report - Presentation

- 5.1 The Chief Executive and Principal (CEP) introduced the presentation by the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) on how the College was managing the current and likely impact of the global pandemic on Learning, People, Reputation and Sustainability for 2019/20 and planning for 2020/21.

- 5.2 The CEP provided the context for the ELT presentation, the main points were:

- **Business continuity (BC):** the College had implemented its BC plan for the Covid-19 outbreak smoothly, quickly moving to remote working between 17 and 20 March. On 20 March all campuses closed to staff as well as students, other than a few employees and contractors undertaking essential building work.
- **Phase 1 current status:** the College is operating remotely to provide learning and back-office functions, maintaining daily contact with vulnerable students and looking after the welfare of staff and students. A small number of canteen and

nursery staff whose pay depended on trading income, had agreed to take a furlough under the HMRC Job Retention Scheme, as agreed by Governors by written resolution on 8 April 2020. The College had implemented special volunteering leave to support those staff volunteering via Voluntary Action Sheffield.

- **Phase 2 limited re-opening:** the College is planning for the next phase of limited re-opening. The Phase 2 re-opening plan is limited to learners for whom it is critical to their completion or progression to attend campus in June/July. It is, predictably, proving to be quite challenging to i) establish protocols, ii) timetable those students, apprentices and staff who need to come to campus, iii) decide when and how to access locations safely, while iv) maintaining high quality online learning for all other students.
- **Phase 3:** the College is also planning for wider re-opening when it is safe to do so. The plan assumes there will need to be continuing measures to limit the spread Covid-19 and the new operating model for 2020/21 will need to include actual or potential remote working.

5.3 Governors asked questions about the approach and discussion included the following main issues.

- **Staff consultation:** governors asked how the College was reassuring staff about their safety in the re-opening phase and the feedback from staff and trade unions. The CEP said that the re-opening group had received a good response to a staff survey. The most frequent staff concern was about maintaining effective social distancing. The re-opening group was using the results for planning and communications. The Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) had discussed the issues. The College would be holding JCC meetings more frequently while planning the next phases. Recognised Trade Unions were keen to support the College on implementation.
- **Governor support:** governors expressed support for the systematic and clear way in which the College leadership team had managed the move to remote working. Members recognised the College's achievement during the lockdown in supporting learning; supporting vulnerable students; implementing new assessment processes; and maintaining back office functions throughout the lockdown. In particular, members mentioned the clear communications that the CEP had sent to staff and students and also shared with governors.

20/2/6 Learning

6.1 The Deputy Chief Executive Curriculum Quality and Assessment (DCE QCA) continued the presentation to explain the College's approach to supporting learners and Learning, Teaching and Assessment. The main points of this section of the presentation were:

- **Online learning:** how staff have embraced online learning and are continuing to develop their skills, with high participation in staff development and team activities.
- **Student welfare and mental health:** the steps staff are taking to check on student welfare and provide materials to students, parents and carers to promote good mental health.
- **Achievements:** planning for phase 2 so that students who need to do so can come to College to complete their qualification as soon as possible.
- **Projected outcomes:** the pass rate projections for 2019/20 including qualifications already completed prior to the lockdown; centre assessment of GCSE and A Levels; centre assessed vocational and functional skills and the forecast pass rate for those students still requiring formal assessment, as above. The data show the College continuing last year's improvement on 2018/2019.
- **Admissions:** the arrangements to process applications; provide bridging studies for Y11 students and ensure effective transition of new learners into FE. Enrolment and induction will ensure that every student is on the right programme.
- **Phase 3 planning for 2020/21:** very difficult employment conditions are forecast in 2020/21. The plans for Phase 3 include provision for more students with elements of face to face and online learning. Curriculum staff are preparing new materials, ensuring appropriate sequencing of learning and preparing students for this change. They are working with ICT and estates staff on the infrastructure plan to support this. Learner recruitment staff are implementing a new enrolment process, including gathering information on students' home IT capability.
- **Teaching and Learning quality:** in the business continuity phase, quality staff and curriculum leaders are doing virtual learning walks to support staff and enhance quality. Extending this approach, the College will be making changes to the Teaching and Learning policy, to include online teaching observations and quality assurance of learning in work and community settings.

6.2 Governors discussed the presentation on learning and the main points raised were as follows:

- **Student engagement:** governors asked if the College knew the level of engagement in online learning. The DCE CQA said staff are reporting to team meetings that there is good engagement in most areas. To remove obstacles to engagement, the College has lent equipment to students. Where students have not been engaging, staff follow this up by telephone. For young students, staff are also contacting parents and carers to encourage re-engagement. The College will be adapting its monitoring systems to track and report engagement across the whole institution.
- **Developing staff digital skills:** a governor asked how the College is building digital capability for the long term and

how it obtains feedback from students on what is working. The DCE CQA said that the College's investment in CPD, Teaching Innovation and Learning and Development Coaches (LDC) means that the College is able to meet the demand for individual and group CPD. LDCs are working with their faculty colleagues to develop subject specific approaches.

- **Transition from business continuity to new operating model for 2020/21:** governors asked about the impact of the move to blended learning on the College's portfolio and educational character. The CEP said that the plans for Phase 3 do not envisage fundamental changes to the College's educational character although the pace of adoption of learning technology has accelerated and there will be some changes to how staff provided some aspects of the curriculum remotely, on a planned basis. The ELT is developing the curriculum plan to accompany the proposed budget for 2020/21 for Governing Body approval.
- **A level and GCSE assessment:** a governor asked about the awarding body moderation process for centre assessed grades. The DCE CQA said that the College had carefully collated and moderated its teacher assessments. All the assessments are supported by evidence of student performance. The awarding bodies will review this evidence should there be any queries about the grade profile.

6.3 Governors welcomed the reassurance provided by the presentation on learning. Members supported the developmental approach the College is taking to i) maintain learning and ii) develop staff to implement high quality online teaching, learning and assessment. Governors thanked and congratulated teaching and pastoral staff on the continuity and support they had provided to students during a difficult period, and asked that this be conveyed by the CEP to staff in a future "all staff" communication.

20/2/7 People

- 7.1 The Executive Director of HR and Organisation Development (EDHROD) continued the presentation on People issues. The main points of this section of the presentation were as follows
- 7.2 **Phase 1:** staff feedback indicated that staff had appreciated the College's early communication and clear messages about premises closing and the move to remote working. The College had implemented the HMRC Job Retention Scheme for a very small number of staff where their employment linked directly to commercial income generation. After a pause and receipt of further guidance from ACAS, performance management is now being conducted remotely.

Phase 2: in planning for some students to attend, the College is taking a safety first approach to build confidence that staff who need to attend campus to work can do so safely. Other staff will continue remote working, where that is the best option. ELT has been encouraging staff feedback through surveys and staff meetings as well as meeting with Recognised Trade Unions.

Overall staff feedback has been that staff appreciate the careful approach the college is taking to re-opening.

Personal risk assessment: the College is implementing an individual risk assessment process for staff who are clinically vulnerable or clinically extremely vulnerable or who have other concerns.

Phase 3: the College has not previously used regular home working and therefore the HR team are reviewing the policy framework to ensure it covers home working. The Staff Development unit is working on the staff development strand of the Digital Strategy project, initially by assessing the workforce digital skills capability using a JISC digital skills audit tool in order to develop a strategy for building workforce digital skills to a suitable standard.

- 7.3 In discussing the People presentation, governors asked about the extent to which the College is planning a long term shift to remote working. The CEP said that while coronavirus continued to be a threat, her current view is that the College needs to reduce the number of people on campus to manage the risk of spreading the virus, and that it is likely that these measures will need to continue into 2020/21. Should the College need some staff to work remotely beyond this, ELT will approach this on a planned and inclusive basis in the same way they have approached the business continuity phases.

20/2/8 Reputation

- 8.1 The Commercial Director continued the presentation explaining how the College is managing communications through the three phases.
- **Prospective students:** the College has received positive feedback from schools and applicants about making early offers to applicants in Phase 1. In Phase 2, the College is responding to school requests for bridging work for Year 11 students who might be intending to progress to college. The College has been running online 'virtual open' days in May and June. 260 visitors visited the website of the Hospitality and Business Virtual Open Day on its first day (6 May 2020), and all the sites continue to attract visitors.
 - **Learner support funding:** the College has implemented direct payments to students in receipt of Free School Meals.
 - **Nursery:** City nursery has remained open and is supporting 14 key worker families including children from other nurseries that have not been able to remain open.
 - **Volunteering:** the College has positively promoted staff engagement in voluntary activity and has donated food to foodbanks and helped produce face shields using 3D printers from its Engineering/Digital/Construction Faculty.
 - **Communication Plans:** using the feedback on what went well in Phase 1, the communication plan for Phase 2 will maintain good, clear, two-way communication that responds

to the issues that matter to students, staff and other stakeholders.

- **Apprentices:** as necessary, the Phase 2 plan will include bringing back onto campus apprentices who need practical training and end point assessments .
- **Adult Skills:** the College is starting a new online care training programme in week commencing 18 May for adults to retrain for employment in care sector. A governor asked if the College will be offering the new adult digital literacy qualification. The CEP said that the English, Maths & ESOL faculty has been considering the DfE curriculum guidance and is planning to introduce Digital Literacy programme for adults. The College will also be looking at how it can use this curriculum for new staff in their induction period.
- **Wider stakeholder engagement:** the College is continuing with launches of employer academies and engagement with employers about apprenticeships and work placements. Some delays are likely but Employer Engagement staff are seeking to maintain engagement despite the pandemic. The College is liaising with Sheffield City Council about joint working to support young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET). Phase 3 will see the college engaging with the local authority, the LEP and others to contribute to economic recovery in the Sheffield City Region.

8.2 Governors discussed the reputational and business development presentation and the main points of discussion were as follows.

- **Digital Skills capital development:** governors asked about the impact of the lockdown measures on the progress of the capital works and if the LEP had been able to extend the duration of the grant agreement to allow for a delay. The Commercial Director said that the LEP had engaged well with the College and is gathering information on all the projects in the programme. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government had set the terms for the duration of programme funding and the LEP will need any change to be approved by the Ministry. The College is awaiting a response.
- **Apprenticeships:** a governor asked how the College is managing the impact of the pandemic on new and existing apprentices. The Commercial Director said that employers have furloughed some apprentices or delayed new starts to 2021. Hospitality and retail sectors have been badly affected but there has been positive communication with the health sector, with the NHS already restarting apprentice recruitment and training.

20/2/9 Sustainability

9.1 The Executive Director of Finance and Resources presented this section of the presentation and the main points were:

Phase 1: premises have been closed but kept in good working order. Some capital works continue where contractor staff are available and can work safely. The Finance team is tracking the additional costs and any income lost. The College will probably lose around £1m in revenue (for example from catering operations) but has been able to make largely matching savings.

Phase 2: to plan for re-opening, Estates has been developing new risk assessments, layouts and cleaning plans. In addition, staff will be managing contractors to re-start work on the capital projects for 2020/21 where this is possible. The Health and Safety staff and Committee, including trade union colleagues, are supporting this planning.

Phase 3: the ESFA income projected for 2020/21 is higher than 2019/20 but different income streams have different risks – some can only be drawn down if students have sufficient confidence in the College to enrol and attend and/or undertake some learning remotely.

- 9.2 Governors considered the presentation on sustainability and were reassured that the College was taking a diligent approach to the risks and costs of re-opening safely while not underestimating the financial challenge. This aspect will be considered further at the next meeting in the draft Budget and financial plan for 2020/21.

20/2/10 Corporate risk management and business during continuity during the Covid-19 period

- 10.1 The Director of Strategy, Planning and Systems Improvement (DSPSI) introduced the Risk Management framework that the College has been using to help manage the business continuity phase and planning for reopening. The College has developed a detailed Covid Risk Register and is reviewing the Strategic Risk Register and actions twice a week to ensure planning is informed by risk. The DSPSI is also chairing the re-opening planning group which is coordinating the risk assessments for re-opening. In developing the approach and the Covid Risk Register, the DSPSI had consulted with the Chair of Governors, the Chair of Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and the Chair Designate who had provided governor challenge on the planning.
- 10.2 The Chair of ARAC commented that he had been consulted on the draft Covid-19 Risk Register, which had been compiled and presented within the College's existing risk management framework and was a sub-set of the Strategic Risk Register. Its success would depend on how well the risks had been identified and understood and on whether the management actions were appropriately resourced. The EDFR said the ELT had allocated a sufficient budget to support implementing risk management measures.
- 10.3 Governors asked how the ELT is balancing the attention being paid to the Covid-19 risks and the other risks on the Strategic Risk Register. The DSPSI said that Business Review and Business Planning meetings are in progress so the ELT is

closely scrutinising the strategic risk register. In planning for 2020/21, the Covid risks are part of mainstream planning.

- 10.4 The Governing Body received the Risk Register for the Covid-19 outbreak and is assured that the College's risk management process is responding adequately to the risks that have crystallised.
- 10.5 The Governing Body received the presentation as a whole and resolved to:
- Support the actions the ELT has taken in Phase 1, thank and congratulate staff on the commitment they have shown to supporting the College and its students during the pandemic.
 - Endorse the careful and phased approach the College is taking in planning the re-opening of campus facilities and the priorities for bringing staff and students back to campus.
 - Agree that the detailed risk assessment and plan for partial re-opening is an operational matter. Should further governor approval or consultation be required prior to July, then the Chair of Governors, Vice Chairs, Chair Designate and Chair of ARAC will be consulted, as appropriate, and will report to members. In addition, if necessary, the Chair will call a special meeting.
 - Agree that, at this point, it does not require any other actions, to maintain adequate and proportionate oversight of the College's educational character and sustainability for 2019/20 and 2020/21.
- 10.6 At 10.25, Kim Streets and Richard Calvert left the meeting.

20/2/11 Committee Report: Teaching, Learning, Quality and Student Experience Committee (TLQSE)

- 11.1 The Chair of TLQSE introduced the minutes of the meeting on 28 April, and highlighted the main points and the 'For information' reports from that meeting that had been included in the board papers for all governors. The Chair said that although some of the information in the quarterly updates had been overtaken by the impact of campus closure, there had been lots of good news on College performance up to March including:
- **Teaching observation scheme:** the College had completed all observations for 2019/20. There was evidence that the scheme was having a positive impact on learners and their achievement. The results at Period 6 demonstrated this impact with improvements in student attendance, retention and progression.
 - **Deep Dive process:** this new process was showing a positive impact with all but two areas showing improvements in retention and attendance.
 - **Safeguarding and student voice:** TLQSE had discussed the implications of the Covid outbreak on learners particularly on safeguarding vulnerable students and student engagement. The College had made great efforts to continue to engage learners and find out their views

The Chair of TLQSE commended these reports to other members.

- 11.2 The Governing Body received the report and welcomed the assurance that the TLQSE Committee had found the College to be making good progress against its improvement plans.

20/2/12 Committee Report: Finance, Employment and General Purposes Committee (FEGP)

- 12.1 The Chair of FEGP introduced the minutes of the meeting held on 22 April, the main points considered and the papers for information. This had been the College's first formal governor committee meeting held online meeting of governors and it had been successful. The main points were:

- **ESFA allocations for 2020/21:** the presentation by the DSPSI on the College's ESFA grant funding streams and allocations for 2020/21 had been very well received. The Clerk agreed to circulate this to all governors for information.
- **Health and Safety:** had been one of FEGP's themes for 2019/20. The Term 2 report showed an improving picture and members had been assured that the College was increasing its attention to promoting a strong health and safety culture, which would be critical in the current circumstances.
- **Pay award:** members had received assurance about pay award
- **Subsidiary companies:** FEGP had approved revised agreements between College and its companies.
- **LEP Digital Skills capital development:** members had received an update on the LEP project. The impact of the Covid outbreak had been an important dimension in the discussion of this and other items

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- 12.2 The Governing Body received the report and welcomed the assurance that the FEGP Committee had continued to maintain close scrutiny of the College's sustainability, its performance against its financial and estates plans and its management of health and safety in spite of the Covid-19 restrictions.

20/2/13 Chair's Action

- 13.1 The Governing Body noted that, following consultation, the Chair had taken action to approve changes to the Instrument of Government on 24 March 2020. The changes were
- Instrument 1 – changes to the definition of 'meeting' and 'written' to permit meetings by videoconference and telephone conference and to make clear that documents and notices include material in electronic form.
 - Instrument 12 (7) – (10): new clauses enabling formal board decision-making by Written Resolution.
 - Instrument 13: a temporary amendment to the quorum until 31 May to reduce it to 30%. The amendment to be

reviewed depending on risk of coronavirus affecting meeting attendance.

- 13.2 The Governing Body resolved to confirm the action in accordance with Instrument 25(1) and that this been necessary to facilitate effective governance during the Covid-19 outbreak.

20/2/14 Written resolutions

- 14.1 The Governing Body noted the written resolution approved by members. On 8 April 2020, the Governing Body resolved by written resolution to approve the following:
- i) The College will seek to avail of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme in respect of staff whose salaries are underpinned by trading income, in the first instance inviting refectory staff to volunteer to be placed on furlough, with no loss of normal salary.
 - ii) Following a review of the impact of the loss of trading income on the demand for the services of its wholly owned subsidiary companies, where necessary, the College will ask the Directors of its wholly owned subsidiary companies to agree to furlough staff who are unable to work while campuses are closed and whose salaries are underpinned by trading income. In doing so, companies would adopt the same principles as those applied by the College.
 - iii) Any further furloughing of staff whose salaries are underpinned by trading income, handled in a manner that is consistent with the report "Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme - Furlough of Staff", and recommended by the CEP, can be approved under Chair's Action.

20/2/15 Review of meeting and closing remarks

- 15.1 Members commented:
- The meeting had gone well and the video conferencing platform had been easy to use. Members appreciated the Chat facility that had enabled them to share questions and comments.
 - Members thanked the ELT members and colleagues on the work in preparing the presentation and the detailed papers for this and committee meetings at the same time as maintaining business continuity of the College and contributing to the City's effort to relieve the distress caused by the pandemic.
- 15.2 The Clerk reminded members that a feedback form was available to note any further comments on the meeting or suggestions for improvements for June/July meetings.

20/2/16 TLQSE Committee Reports for information

The Governing Body noted for information the following items that the TLQSE Committee considered at its meeting on Wednesday 29 April 2020.

- KPIs and College Improvement Plan update P6 2019-20;

- QTLA update;
- Student Voice update (Term 2:2019-20);
- Complaints update (Term 2:2019-20).

20/2/17 FEGP Committee Reports for information

The Governing Body noted for information the following items from the FEGP Committee held on Wednesday 22 April 2020

- FEGP KPIs P6 2019-20;
- Finance Report P6 2019-20 CONFIDENTIAL;
- Health and Safety Report (Term 2: 2019-20) CONFIDENTIAL.

20/2/18 Other items for information

The Governing Body noted for information the notes of the Health and Safety Committee meeting held on 26 March 2020.

20/2/19 Date and time of next meeting

8 July 2020 8:30 – 10:30