

**FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION MEETINGS 2021/22**

**MINUTES OF THE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION MEETING**

**Held at 4pm on Monday 16th May 2022**

**Nelson and Colne College (Boardroom) and Zoom**

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| **Members present:** | Phil Wilkinson (Chair), Emma Schofield (Vice Chair), Mike Phelan, Zulfi Khan, Simone Hartley-Gott, Gillian Sharples, Nadeem Rashid, David Whatley, Chris Smith and Liz Sedgley |
| **In attendance:** | David Rothwell (Deputy Principal – Finance and Resources)  Tracey Baron (Deputy Principal – Curriculum and Quality)  Claire Jarvis (Assistant Principal – Finance and HR)  Morag Davis (Assistant Principal – Technical Curriculum)  Jayne Wynne (Director of Marketing)  Fionnuala Swann (Assistant Principal – Academic)  Andrew Dewhurst (Chief Information Officer)  Debbie Corcoran (Director of Governance) |

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| **Item 1.** | **1.1 Welcome and apologies for absence**  Phil Wilkinson (Chair) welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Amanda Melton CBE, Julie Turner and Tom Gee.   * 1. **Declarations of Interest**   Members and officers present declared they had no interests, personal, fiduciary, or otherwise in any item on the open agenda for the meeting.  **1.3 Minutes of the Previous Corporation Meetings (21st February 2022 and 21st March 2022)**  *Submitted: Reports (circulated in meeting papers)*  The minutes of the Board meetings of 21st February 2022 and 21st March 2022 were reviewed, and approved as an accurate record, for the signature of the Chair.  **1.4 Matters Arising**  *Submitted: Reports (circulated in meeting papers)*  The matters arising log was reviewed and the current position was noted. The Board welcomed and considered the matters arising update related to Gender Pay Gap provided by Claire Jarvis (Assistant Principal – Finance and HR).  **Resolved:** **to receive and note the updated Matters Arising log and additional report on Gender Pay Gap** |
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| **Item 2.** | **Strategic Discussions** |
| **2.1 Curriculum Planning for 2022/23**  *Submitted: Reports and presentation (circulated in meeting papers and presentation in the meeting)*  Tracey Baron (Deputy Principal – Quality and Curriculum) presented the report which set out planned curriculum developments in the 2022/23 academic year for the College Group’s provision. The presentation was accompanied by a refreshed mapping of the Group’s curriculum offer, setting out curriculum intent, changes and developments in 2022/23 and the rationale for the developments. The Deputy Principal recapped the curriculum planning process in place internally, which considers factors such as local student/employer/economic needs, quality and outcomes, and also both national, regional and local skill policies and priorities such as those set out in the national Skills White paper. The Deputy Principal confirmed that a new consideration when curriculum planning this year was considering intelligence within the recently published Lancashire Local Skills Implementation Plan (LSIP), a copy of which had been shared with the Board for review.  In relation to curriculum changes being made, in respect of the Group’s 16-19 offer, the Board noted that a key change is the introduction of an additional 90 minutes a week of independent Directed Digital Learning and 20 hours of extra-curricular activity for all learners, including foundation students, and those with high needs. The Board also noted developments such as new content being included in T level transition programmes, additional extra maths provision for T level transition students – plus the introduction of new T levels in Healthcare Science, Engineering and manufacturing and Business and Administration. In relation to adult curriculum, changes set out included the extension of the level 3 Lifetime Skills Guarantee, adult T-levels pilot, ‘Multiply’, plus new and extended curriculum being introduced in areas such as railway. Developments were also set out at headline level against the adult education budget (AEB) mainstream delivery, professional skills delivery and provision delivered through subcontractors.  Liz Sedgley joined the Corporation meeting.  Discussions in the meeting included testing the Group’s responsiveness to employer and industry demand. The Board sought assurance that the strategy for sub-contracting is strategic and fits with the Group’s priorities and will deliver exceptional quality – and that a responsive and flexible approach to individual and sectoral employer need is in place. In relation to the recently published Lancashire Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP), examples were given by the leadership team of how the LSIP is being used to test, challenge and shape curriculum developments. The Deputy Principal confirmed that teams are nuancing various courses to meet identified skill gaps in the LSIP, with examples given across different provision areas. Employer engagement and stakeholder engagement was recognised by the Board as a key priority to support responding to the LSIP priorities, as well as its being used to shape the curriculum.  **Resolved: That the Board receive and note the strategic discussion item on Curriculum Planning 2022/23, and key developments – and the influence of the recently published Lancashire Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) on the Group’s offer and approach**  **2.2 Quality Strategy**  *Submitted: Report (circulated in meeting papers)*  Tracey Baron (Deputy Principal – Quality and Curriculum) presented the report which included a refreshed Quality Strategy and Framework for Board review, and supporting Quality Assurance Framework 2022/23. The Board welcomed that their previous feedback had been considered, and a summary flowchart produced setting out the high level Quality Strategy and Framework process. The Board considered that there were no fundamental changes proposed, and reflected on learning from the recent Ofsted inspection and outstanding outcome.  Discussions focused on the Board gaining assurance on the relationship and interconnection between the quality of an area of provision and appraisals of staff, so that appraisal conversations add value. The Board asked for, and received, an understanding of how learner feedback and any complaints from learners or parents influence the quality assurance process – with the Deputy Principal setting out the systematic approach taken by the Group to identify any trends or possible systemic areas for review and improvement. Also, assurance as given on the quality assurance in place within subcontractors, with the Deputy Principal confirming that the process and standards are the same – subcontractors are seen as part of our curriculum teams, therefore they input to curriculum intent and participate in curriculum reviews, just as internal colleagues do.  The Board thanked the Deputy Principal for the report, and assurance within.  **Resolved: That the Board receive and approve the 2022/23 Quality and Performance Strategy, and accompanying Quality Assurance Framework**  **2.3 Risk Strategy and annual risk register**  *Submitted: Report (circulated in meeting papers)*  David Rothwell (Deputy Principal – Finance and Resources) presented the report which provided an overview of the Group’s agreed strategy and approach for the management of risk, and an update on the current risk profiles, based on the Risk Register. The Deputy Principal summarised the approach to risk management in place through arrangements at both the Board, and Audit Committee level. The contribution, and added value, of the cross-College Risk Management Group was set out, with the Board noting that it meets termly, aligned to Audit Committee’s business cycle. The Deputy Principal confirmed that after an internal review and consideration, no fundamental changes were proposed to arrangements and the framework in place.  The Board considered the risk management framework and the latest version of the Risk Register, considering their own perspectives and view on relevant risks and their rating. It was agreed that the Risk Register will be reviewed following finalisation of the Group’s Strategic Plan, ensuring risks are fully considered in key areas such as the appetite to possibly increase commercial activity and enter new markets. The refresh would also allow for consideration of the Board’s risk appetite, which it was noted had begun to be explored at the April awayday.  **Resolved: That the Board receive and note the Risk Strategy and Risk Register**  **2.4 16-18 Marketing Strategy 2022-26 and update post-Ofsted**  *Submitted: Report (circulated in meeting papers) and presentation*  Jayne Wynne (Director of Marketing) presented a report and accompanying slides setting out a proposed 16-18 Marketing Strategy 2022-26 for Board approval. The Strategy, and Board consideration, focused on the current position, 16-18 curriculum overview, competitors and growth plans. Related targets and supporting school liaison activity was also set out and considered. The Strategy was thoroughly reviewed by the Board, who remain ambitious for growth and increased market share. The Board welcomed an update at a future Corporation meeting on brand awareness, which they recognise will make a key contribution to guiding our success. New materials were shared - such as a ‘Go for Gold’ exam survival kit for student, bespoke materials for gifted and talented learners, plus additional materials which had been customised for students at each secondary school in our local districts.  The Director of Marketing also took the opportunity to update the Board on the strategy and action taken to publicise and maximise the impact of the Group’s recent achievement of an outstanding Ofsted inspection.  The Board welcomed the considered approach and step change therein, and looked forward to the results and benefits of the investment made.  **Resolved: To receive and approve the 16-18 Marketing Strategy 2022-26, and note the update on messaging and marketing post-Ofsted inspection** |
| **Item 3.** | **Principals Report – including Awayday Update** |
| *Submitted: Report (circulated in meeting papers)*  David Rothwell (Deputy Principal – Finance and Resources) presented the report on behalf of the Principal. Key headlines within the report, and which were considered, included an updated framework for the College Group’s Strategic Plan following the Board’s strategic planning event in April; information on planned industrial action by UCU, and also an update on The Times Education Commission.  **Resolved: To receive and note the Principal’s Report, including updated Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and revised framework for the College Group’s Strategic Plan** |
| **Item 4.** | **Items to receive/note/approve** |
| **4.1 Finance Report**  *Submitted: Report (circulated in meeting papers)*  David Rothwell (Deputy Principal – Finance and Resources) presented the report, which offered an update on the College Group’s financial position at 31 March 2022, including comparison to the mid-year re-forecast – and a summary update on progress against major capital projects.  The financial KPIs were reported to be as follows:    The Deputy Principal updated on progress and likely impact of the Group’s recently commissioned funding optimisation review. Discussions focused on the need for continued tight financial management to preserve the current financial health grade, with continued Board scrutiny of the high staff to income cost ratio which remains above the strategic target. The Board was also updated on conversations with Lloyds in relation to covenants.  In relation to capital, the Board welcomed the submission and progress of the final business case into the Towns Deals Board for the £3.2mn Advanced Digital Skills Academy project, and that local appraisal was nearing finalisation. The Board also noted that phase 1 of the ‘hub’ element of the project is part funded by T-level Wave 3 BFIG grant and, as a condition of grant, works have to be completed by August 2022. The Board had approved the appointment of Medlocks as the main contractor, and were updated that works are due to start on site later this month. The Board also welcomed that there had been approval in principle of the Group’s £3mn project bid to the FE Capital Transformation Fund re Phase 1 Hameldon Building modernisation – with a final decision to be confirmed before the end of the month. Thanks were shared with the team, following approval to proceed at the last Board meeting, of the Group’s submission of a bid for T-level Business and Administration provision to modernise and reconfigure the ground floor of the Boulsworth building at Nelson site – with a funding decision expected in July 2022.  The Board also noted that work continues on the Stage 2 project development finalisation processes in respect of the Lancashire Institute of Technology (IoT) project. The four original concepts in our bid have now been worked up and fleshed out into more concrete project proposals - though detailed work relating to specialist equipment investment requirements is still ongoing. As indicated previously to the Board, the Deputy Principal reminded that, if successful, this project will require the College to sign up to separate licensing and commercial agreements as a separate IoT Company structure is created.  **Resolved:**   * **To receive and note the Finance Report** * **To receive and note the update on capital investment and projects** |
|  | **4.2 Governance Report**  *Submitted: Report (circulated in meeting papers)*  Debbie Corcoran (Director of Governance) presented the report, and following due consideration, the Board resolved as follows:  **Resolved: That the Board:**   * **Approve the appointment of Steve Campbell as a Board member with an initial term of office ending 30th May 2023, and including membership of the Quality and Standards Committee** * **Approve revised terms of reference for the Quality and Standards Committee, as recommended by the Quality and Standards Committee** * **Approve the terms of reference provided for a new sub-Committee for Capital and Estates**   Within the Governance Report, Claire Jarvis (Assistant Principal-Finance and HR) provided an overview and update on the dispute resolution between the College Group and UCU, following the special Board meeting held on 29th March 2022. The basis of the dispute was confirmed, summary of the meeting provided, and outcome shared. The Board also received a copy of correspondence received from UCU’s regional team following the dispute resolution meeting on 29th March. The Board expressed their disappointment at the potential impact strike action could have on students and learners, and noted the update provided, supporting the approach and position taken.  **Resolved: That the Board:**   * **Receive and note the update on the Dispute Resolution meeting held with UCU on 29th March 2022** |
| **4.3 Committee Minutes for assurance**  *Submitted: Report (circulated in meeting papers)*  Following consideration, the Board received and noted as follows:  **Resolved: To receive and note the approved minutes from the Principal Selection Panels (18th March 2022 and 21st April 2022) for information and assurance** |
| **Item 5.** | **Any Other Business** |
| There were no items of any other business. |
| **Item 6.** | **Review and reflections on the meeting against Group values** |
| Emma Schofield (Vice Chair) invited reflections from Board Members and leadership team on today’s meeting, decisions and ways of working against the Group’s values. Members welcomed that the outcomes from the awayday were clearly feeding into items and work today, as a thread throughout. The Chair was thanked for the timing and pacing of the meeting - all items had been given the thorough and planned airing. |

**Debbie Corcoran**

**Director of Governance**

**Signed as an accurate record:…………………………………………(Chair of Corporation)**

**Name:…………………………………………………………………………..Date:…………………**