

**FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION MEETINGS 2022/23**

**MINUTES OF THE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION MEETING**

**Held at 8.30am on Wednesday 17th May 2023**

**The Crow Wood Hotel in Burnley (BB12 0RT)**

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| **Board Members present:** | Phil Wilkinson (Chair), Lisa O’Loughlin (Principal and CEO), Gillian Sharples (Staff Governor), Chris Smith, Tom Gee (Staff Governor), Steve Campbell, Zulfi Khan, David Whatley, Liz Sedgley (from item 3), Helen Curtis and Simone Hartley Gott (Student Governor) |
| **In attendance:** | Tracey Baron (Deputy Principal – Curriculum and Quality)  David Rothwell (Deputy Principal – Finance and Resources)  Andrew Dewhurst (Chief Information Officer)  Claire Jarvis (Assistant Principal – Finance and HR)  Sam Mercer (Assistant Principal – Planning and Performance)  Morag Davis (Assistant Principal – Technical Curriculum)  Jayne Wynne (Director of Marketing)  Fionnuala Swann (Assistant Principal – Academic)  Andy Parkin (Assistant Principal – LAL)  Debbie Corcoran (Director of Governance) |

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| **Item 1.** | **1.1 Welcome and apologies for absence**  Phil Wilkinson (Chair of the Corporation) welcomed everyone to the meeting – in particular, Helen Curtis as a new Board member. Apologies were received from Gemma Marsh (Board member).  The Board noted that today’s Corporation meeting was being held within a 2-day strategic planning event or Awaydays for the Corporation and leadership team, focusing on gathering Board input to the Strategic Review which is developing a new strategic plan and way forward for the College Group.   * 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, with the exception of:   1. Item 4 Governance Report, which included consideration of a member’s term of office and require them to withdraw from the meeting 2. Item 5 relating to the Pendle Education Trust (PET). Given his role with a different multi academy trust, Steve Campbell (Board member) would leave the meeting for the discussion and had not received the report, as it was commercial in confidence. The following were also noted as relevant declared interests for Board members or attendees today, which did not exclude people from discussions today: Lisa O’Loughlin (Trustee and Member of the PET), Debbie Corcoran and David Rothwell (Members of the PET) and David Whatley (Trustee of the PET).   **1.3 Minutes of the Previous Corporation Meeting (6th February 2023)**  *Submitted: Draft minutes (circulated in meeting papers)*  The minutes of the Board meeting of 6th February 2023 were reviewed, and approved as an accurate record, for the signature of the Chair.  **Resolved:** **That the Board approve the minutes of the Corporation meeting on 6th February 2023**  **1.4 Matters Arising**  *Submitted: Reports (circulated in meeting papers)*  The matters arising log was reviewed and the current position was noted. The Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Dashboard (as at end of March 2023) had been provided, and comments or questions invited from Board members. Members shared their view that the Strategic Awaydays today and tomorrow were adding significant value in their understanding and scrutiny of areas of high risk or those needing improved performance.  The Director of Governance updated the Board that the Corporation had approved the written resolution dated 12th May 2023, regarding the appointment of new Board members and a co-opted Committee member.  **Resolved:** **That the Board:**   * **receive the report and note the matters arising log and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)** * **note the approval of the written resolution dated 12th May 2023 regarding Board and co-opted Committee appointments** |
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| **Item 2.** | **Accountability Agreement** |
| *Submitted: Report (circulated in meeting papers)*  Lisa O’Loughlin (Principal and CEO) presented the report, which offered a draft Accountability Agreement for Board consideration and approval. The Principal recapped the relevant policy framework set out within the Government’s Skills for Jobs White Paper and its vision to transform further education (FE), which had been followed by 2 funding and accountability consultations that described how the skills system will be reformed. The Board were aware that emerging from the reforms is a new requirement for an annual ‘Accountability Agreement’ – a 2-part document setting out the overall expectations of skill providers in return for the Government’s funding investment. Part 1 of the Agreement was noted to still be under development by the Department for Education (DfE) and will set out national skill priorities and expectations – with a Part 2 required from all FE Colleges, to set out their response to national and local skill priorities.  The Board noted that the draft Accountability Agreement developed by the Principal and leadership team was shared today to gather feedback to allow its submission to DfE as a draft document by the end of May 2023. It was noted that further refinement is needed after the draft submission, with an updated Agreement to be developed and shared with the Board for approval ahead of the final submission date of the end of July 2023. These timings critically allow for a fuller consideration and reflection of the learning and insight continuing to be gained through the Group’s Strategic Review. Timings also allow for a revised version to give fuller consideration of the national skill priorities which are yet to be confirmed, and the local priorities being set out in the Lancashire Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP), which will be finalised soon. The Principal set out, and the Board was assured on, arrangements to ensure full consultation on the Agreement with employers, stakeholders, partner organisations and also local Colleges. It was agreed for the Board to receive invitations to employer round-tables held to support development of the Agreement, to directly hear employer voice.  The Principal shared feedback from her ongoing conversations with political leaders in our local boroughs, and set out examples of the Agreement demonstrating how the College Group’s provision and curriculum is being shaped by local priorities and needs. The Board welcomed that when refining the Agreement, it is expected that sections on local context will be strengthened further, targets made smart and volumes of provision added for areas of delivery such as Bootcamps and T Levels. In discussions the Board recognised that, as required by the relevant guidance, the Agreement will be a high-level document and publicly available summary of strategy and key related targets for some, but not all areas of curriculum.  The Accountability Agreement was recognised by the Board as a key element of considering and setting out the Group’s approach to meeting the ‘skills measure’ introduced by Ofsted into inspections. The Board acknowledged the Group’s current self-assessment that it is making a strong contribution to meeting skill needs, and were updated by the Chair of Quality and Standards Committee, Steve Campbell, on the Committee’s insight and support and challenge into the Group’s continued development in this priority area.  The Board thanked the Principal and senior team for the high-quality draft shared today, and were assured of the plans for its further refinement. Given this, members were in agreement that the draft Accountability Agreement was approved for submission, subject to any further refinement being progressed through Chairs action.  **Resolved: That the Board approve the draft Accountability Agreement and its submission to DfE at the end of May, subject to any further refinements ahead of this submission being agreed under Chair’s action** |
| **Item 3.** | **Finance Report** |
| *Submitted: Report (circulated in meeting papers) and presentation in the meeting*  *Liz Sedgley entered the meeting.*  David Rothwell (Deputy Principal – Finance and Resources) shared that in consideration of the wider Awaydays agenda and focused discussions scheduled pertaining to financial wellbeing and performance in the context of the developing Strategic Review and plan, the finance report had been truncated for this meeting. Key management account schedules to period 8 (end March 2023) were shared and reviewed by the Board.  The Deputy Principal’s summary and Board’s questions focused on the current and projected position in relation to EBITDA; key risks relating to the Adult Education Budget (AEB); forward strategy to reduce subcontracting which will further improve meeting local needs and secure efficiencies, and also the development of robust plans for achieving 16-18 growth. Key areas for new curriculum development emerging through the Awaydays were considered against local labour market needs and local skill priorities, with Board assured on the continued development in a financially sustainable approach.  **Resolved: That the Board receive and note the Finance Report** |
| **Item 4.** | **Governance Report** |
| *Submitted: Report (circulated in meeting papers)*  Following due consideration, **the Board resolved** as follows:   * **To note the update on the commissioning of an external review of governance of the College Corporation, and to approve delegation to Search Committee of the contracting process, appointment and progress of the work ahead of further Board consideration at the July 2023 Corporation meeting** * **To note the approval of the written resolution dated 20th April 2023: *That following the post-tender evaluation completed by Pearson Fraser on behalf of the College Group, and in line with Pearson Fraser’s recommendation from the evaluation, the Board of Corporation approves the appointment of Seddon Construction as the main contractor for the business administration and employer hub curriculum areas at Nelson campus, with a full building contract value of £2,049k (including VAT)*** * **To receive and note the unapproved minutes of the Quality and Standards Committee meeting of 7th March 2023, and the unapproved minutes of the Audit Committee meeting of 8th March 2023** * **To approve the Audit Committee’s recommendation that RSM Audit be appointed as the financial statements and regularity auditors for the College Group, and the associated fee**   Steve Campbell (Board member) left the meeting.  Following due consideration, **the Board resolved** as follows:   * **To re-appoint Steve Campbell as a Board member, with a term of office ending 31st May 2026**   and asked that their thanks be shared with Steve for his ongoing contribution. |
| **Item 5.** | **Pendle Education Trust (PET) *Reserved Minute*** |
| *Submitted: Confidential Report (controlled circulated in meeting papers)*  Recorded under a reserved minute, due to commercial sensitivity. |
| **Item 6.** | **Any Other Business** |
| There were no items of any other business.  The Chair thanked the Corporation and senior team for their contributions to both the meeting, and broader Awaydays, and the meeting was closed. |

**Debbie Corcoran**

**Director of Governance**

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

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