

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Corporation
held on Tuesday 27 April 2021**

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

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

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

		Action
1.	<p>I. Apologies for absence Apologies were received from Tony Ford.</p> <p>II. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p> <p>III. Declaration of Interest Igor Andronov, James Caird and Alan Layng declared interests regarding their re-appointment to the Board.</p>	
2.	<p>I. Minutes of the last Meetings The Board agreed that the Chair should sign the minutes of the meetings held on 15 December 2020, 26 January 2021 and 19 March 2021 as true records.</p> <p>II. Matters arising The Director of Personnel referred to the action from 15 December 2020 minutes confirming that a review of the profile of staff shortlisted for posts had commenced as it had appeared that more females had been shortlisted which was summarised in the single equality scheme.</p> <p>III. Notes from Governors' Workshop: 15 December 2020 The Clerk reported that the presentation from the last workshop on safeguarding and Prevent is available to access on Moodle.</p>	

The Board agreed: -

- To approve the minutes

Discussion

3. Principal's Report

- I. The Principal had prepared a written report with specific points discussed. The Principal has been appointed chair of a Skills Board established in Hereford; membership includes some employers and education providers. The Principal had discussion with a civil servant from the Department for Work and Pensions regarding delivery of a work-based skills academy to provide short programmes to assist the unemployed to gain employment in some areas in Shropshire. The Principal was invited to join the AoC as representative of the West Midlands Board. There has been preliminary discussion with a provider in Wales to establish a contract to sub contract apprenticeship delivery. The Principal had met NMITE to discuss delivering training and skills as part of a joint bid.
- II. Lateral flow test (LFT) centres were set up for a 3-week period in March identifying seven asymptomatic positive cases from 6,800 tests. Home testing kits have been issued to students and staff to complete twice weekly on a voluntary basis. The College has not had a confirmed outbreak of COVID-19 to date.
- III. Government has launched its Skills Accelerator fund to address local skills planning in pilot areas which will be driven by the Chamber. A brief summary of Local Skills Improvement Plans' trailblazers and the strategic development fund was outlined. This will provide time limited funding to be spent by April 2022 with collaborative working. CMT have discussed options and support a potential project by the Marches LEP which would focus on health care. Telford College has proposed to be the lead college joined by HLNSC and Shrewsbury College. The Chair reported he had also met with the Chairs from Telford and Shrewsbury Colleges. Governors will be updated of progress in the event that the bid progresses with applicable support requested. Governors supported progression of the Marches LEP bid.
- IV. FE Commissioner letter: February 2021 and revised benchmarks were noted particularly the financial benchmarks. The Director of Finance explained that the change in the financial current ratio was of concern to some colleges; however, the College has a strong balance sheet and the new measures are favourable.
- V. ESFA have written to confirm that the College is no longer in intervention. This was originally instigated in response to the requisition of County Training and the merger with North Shropshire College.
- VI. The Director of Finance summarised progress of capital projects in Shropshire and Herefordshire. The College is on

track to complete conditional work projects totalling c£900K by the end of September in accordance with the funding deadline.

The Board agreed: -

- To note the reports
- To support progression of the Marches LEP bid for the Strategic Development Fund with progress to be reported to the Board

4. KPIs

The Deputy Principal presented the reports. Attendance to March 2021 was reported which had improved by 1% compared to the last academic year, with the exception of Oswestry Campus which was on par with last year. English and maths cumulative attendance had improved with lessons delivered remotely.

Overall retention was high at 96%. There were some students who had not engaged or had limited engagement during lockdown; some 19+ years attendance had been affected. Retention and achievement rates are being monitored with strategies implemented to support students. Teachers are working extremely hard to encourage students to return to classroom teaching and learning. Several students have secured employment during lockdown and have chosen not to return to College.

Data for apprenticeships showed the best-case overall achievement was 74.8% against the target of 76% and 54.7% timely achievement. This year it had been challenging to retain students to their end point assessments. It was anticipated that this would be a similar picture nationally.

The Board agreed: -

- To note the KPIs and progress to date

Decisions

5. Quality

The Director of Personnel explained that the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy had been revised further since December 2020 following discussion by the Q&S Committee and input from the Chair of the Committee.

The Board agreed: -

- To approve the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

6. Governance

Recommendations were made by the Search and Governance Committee following discussion about the contribution and knowledge of individual Governors whose terms would end this year, skills represented on the Board and consideration of existing vacancies.

The Board agreed: -

- To re-appoint Tony Ford, Igor Andronov and James Caird as Independent Governors for a further year in office
- To re-appoint Alan Layng as an Independent Governor for a

3-year term who would also join the Search and Governance Committee

- To re-appoint Kevin Tong and Sebastian Bowen for a 4 year and 1-year term respectively
- To approve the Health and Safety Policy

7. Finance

- I. The Tuition Fees Policy 2021/22 was recommended for approval by the F&E Committee. There was a query about the fee of £995 for adults with no entitlement on pages 3 requesting detailed explanation to be included on page 5.
- II. Approval arrangements for the insurance tender which was being managed by Crescent Consortium Ltd in the sum of £200K were summarised which could be approved by special resolution. It was agreed to approve by Chair's action.
- III. The sub contracting April 2021 submission was a new requirement by ESFA meaning that a provider could not sub contract more than 25% of any income stream. The College currently sub contracts more than 25% and would therefore require EFSA's approval. It was noted that in future the AEB budget will be allocated differently and the level of subcontracting reduced over time to meet ESFA's requirements.

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L Watkins

The Board agreed: -

- To approve the Tuition Fees Policy 2021/22 subject to clarification of point raised regarding the fee for adults with no entitlement which would be circulated to Governors
- To delegate approval of the insurance tender to be approved by Chair's action which had been allocated in the budget totalling £200K
- To approve the sub contracting April 2021 submission to ESFA

Information

8. Risk Register - noted

9. Minutes from Committees

- I. Audit Committee: 29 March 2021
- II. Quality and Standards Committee: 24 March 2021
- III. Finance and Employment Committee: 24 March 2021
- IV. Search and Governance Committee: 24 March 2021: The Committee had discussed the Board's self assessment agreeing to arrange Governor one to one reviews with the Chair.

10. Reports - noted

- I. Health and Safety Report
- II. Staff Report
- III. Safeguarding and Child Protection Report
- IV. Equality and Diversity Report
- V. Learner Voice Feedback

11. Management Accounts to 28 February 2021 - noted

12. Any other business and comments

The Chair recorded appreciation to CMT and staff for their ongoing hard work during the pandemic; Governors concurred with this.

13. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Tuesday 13 July 2021: Governors' Workshop commencing at 2.30 pm and the Board meeting at 4.00 pm. It was anticipated that this could be held on campus. The Clerk would confirm arrangements.

L Watkins

[Staff and Student Governors left the meeting for the confidential agenda]

14. Minutes of the confidential Meeting: 15 December 2020

The Board agreed: -

- To approve the minutes

15. Confidential minutes from the F&E Committee: 24 March 2021

The minutes were noted along with the confidential staff report.

Signed as a true record of proceedings

Chair: **Date:**